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Winter Population Trends of Woodpeckers in Iowa.

DARWIN KOENIG
Route 4
DECORAH, IOWA

INTRODUCTION

Seven species of woodpeckers regularly occur in winter in Iowa. Four species (Pileated, Red-bellied, Hairy, and Downy Woodpeckers) are considered as being basically non-migratory and the other three (Common Flicker, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker) as being migratory to a greater or lesser degree (Brown, 1971). Two species, the Red-headed and Hairy Woodpeckers, are included on The Blue List for 1976 by Arbib (1975) and are apparently declining in some parts of their ranges. In order to determine the trends of early winter woodpecker populations in Iowa, Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) for the 25-year period from 1951 to 1975 were analyzed. Only counts that were conducted for five or more years at a given location were included in this study.

Three hundred and thirty nine Iowa CBCs from 21 localities were analyzed from the total of 352 Iowa CBCs which were published in *Audubon Field Notes* and *American Birds* during the study period. A total of 27,316 woodpeckers representing seven species was recorded during the 9,756 party-hours of observation. All but one count recorded at least one woodpecker.

METHODS

The data were analyzed by calculating (1) woodpecker density * (number of woodpeckers seen per 10 party-hours), (2) frequency of occurrence (the percentage of counts on which a species was found), and (3) percent of the total woodpecker population that each species constituted. Density was calculated yearly for all species except the Pileated Woodpecker and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and for 5-year periods for all species. The counts were grouped according to degrees of latitude to see what effect, if any, differences in latitude had on the numbers of woodpeckers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 gives the count number, count locality, number of counts reported from each locality, and the latitude of the count center. The count number corresponds to the numbered circles in Figure 2 (and subsequent maps). Table 1 shows that there is considerable variation in the number of counts reported from the various localities; this can lead to difficulties in correctly interpreting the data. Ideally only localities with continuous coverage should be utilized, but this would leave most of the state unrepresented as only four localities reported a count for each year of the study. Indeed, even with the 21 localities included in the study it can be seen from Figure 2 that most areas of the state are still not adequately represented.

* I have probably misused the term density in using it to express numbers per unit of time. Density is usually used (in population studies) to express numbers per unit of area. Frequency is probably a more correct term for numbers per unit of time, but I have used frequency in a different way (see (2) above).

Table 1
LOCATION, LATITUDE, AND NUMBER OF CBS's

Count Number	Count Locality	No. of Counts	Degrees N. Latitude
1.	Burlington	11	40
2.	Lamoni	13	40
3.	Shenandoah	21	40
4.	Cedar Rapids	6	41
5.	Clinton	20	41
6.	Davenport	24	41
7.	Des Moines	25	41
8.	Iowa City	25	41
9.	Mt. Vernon	12	41
10.	Muscatine	15	41
11.	Princeton-Comanche	7	41
12.	Ames	7	42
13.	Cedar Falls	19	42
14.	Dubuque	25	42
15.	Sioux City	25	42
16.	Wapsipinicon River Valley	21	42
17.	Buffalo Center	5	43
18.	Decorah	20	43
19.	Estherville	5	43
20.	Union Slough	13	43
21.	Yellow River Forest	20	43

Table 2 gives the number of hours and counts for each 5-year period for each degree of latitude. The number of hours have increased each period. The number of counts has remained about the same for the last 15 years after almost doubling from the beginning of the study. There has been much variation in party-hours and numbers of counts within and between the various latitudes.

Table 2
NUMBER OF COUNTS AND PARTY-HOURS BY DEGREES OF
LATITUDE DURING THE 5-YEAR PERIODS FROM 1951-1975

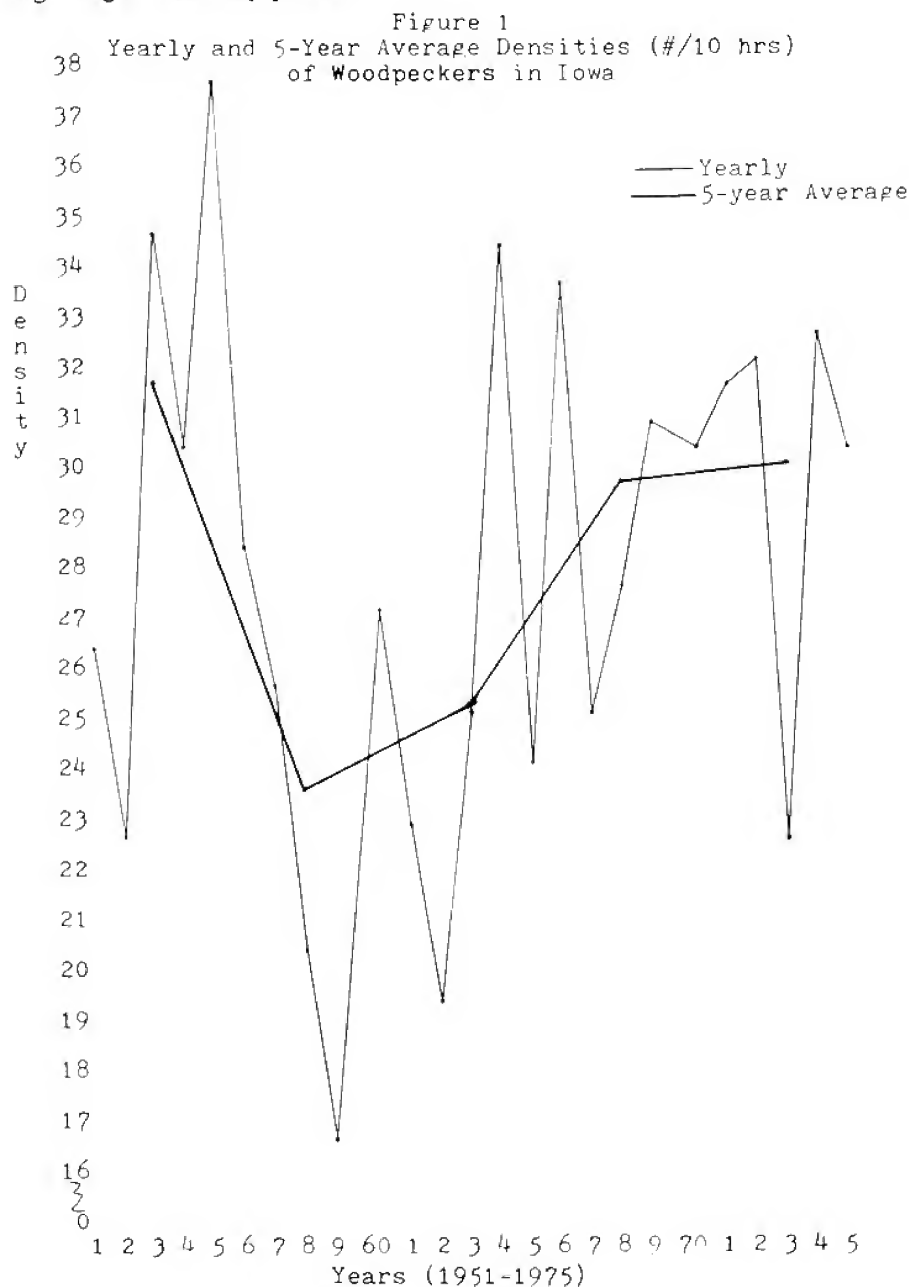
5-year Period	Number of Hours					%	Number of Counts					%
	40°	41°	42°	43°	Total		40°	41°	42°	43°	Total	
1	10	558	324	32	924	9	1	19	18	4	42	12
2	118	1014	316	241	1689	17	6	25	20	12	63	19
3	175	1098	301	382	1956	20	10	27	19	23	79	23
4	379	1249	432	208	2268	23	15	28	20	14	77	23
5	359	1565	728	267	2919	30	13	35	20	10	78	23
Total	1041	5484	2101	1130	9756		45	134	97	63	339	

Table 3
COMPOSITION OF THE WINTER WOODPECKER POPULATION IN IOWA

Species	Number observed	Percent of total woodpecker population
Common Flicker	3453	12.7
Pileated Woodpecker	193	0.7
Red-bellied Woodpecker	5307	19.4
Red-headed Woodpecker	3866	14.2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	110	0.4
Hairy Woodpecker	2887	10.6
Downy Woodpecker	11,500	42.1
Total	27,316	

Table 3 gives the percentage of the total woodpecker population that each species comprised. The Downy Woodpecker was by far the most numerous species and the sapsucker the least numerous.

Figure 1 is a graph of the yearly and 5-year average densities of the total woodpecker population. After a precipitous decline in the second 5-year period, the densities have been increasing steadily, but are still below the average for the beginning of the study period.



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Figure 3
Yearly and 5-Year Average Densities (#/10 hrs)
of the Common Flicker in Iowa

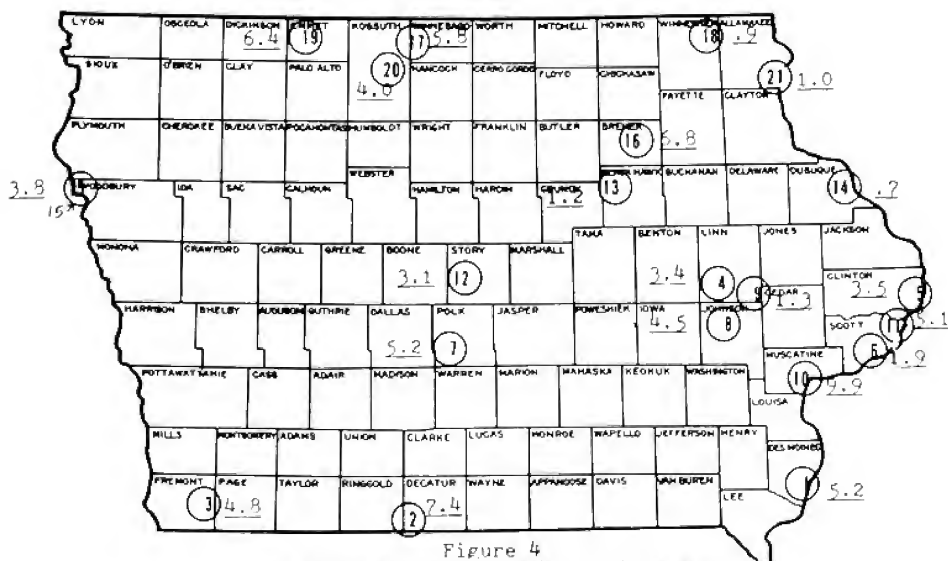
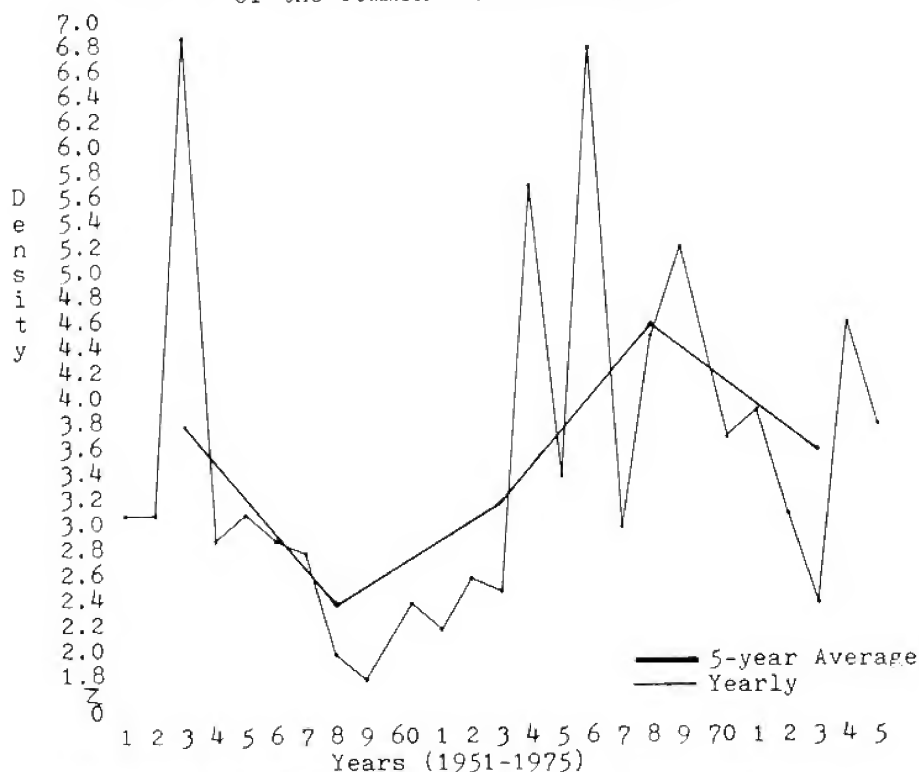


Figure 4
Average Densities (#/10 hrs) of the
Common Flicker at each County Locality

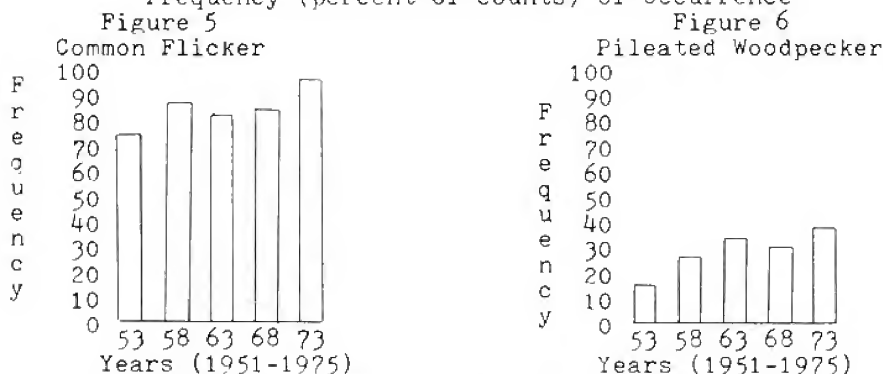
to west (Figure 4). Flicker densities have remained relatively stable (Figure 3). The highest number of flickers reported on a count was 110 at Muscatine in 1966.

Table 4
Common Flicker

Latitude	No. of counts taken	Number observed	%	Density No. per 10 hours	Frequency of occurrence	
					No. of counts	%
43°	63	215	6	1.9	51	81
41°	97	634	18	3.0	77	79
41°	134	2017	58	3.7	128	96
40°	45	587	17	5.6	44	98

Figures 5 & 6

Frequency (percent of counts) of Occurrence



The year indicates the mid-point of the 5-year period.

Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus*

Anderson -- "... formerly a not uncommon resident in heavily timbered portions of Iowa, and an individual or isolated pair is still occasionally reported from localities where belts of native timber yet remain."

DuMont -- "A rare and very local permanent resident, confined to the heavy timber of the south and east."

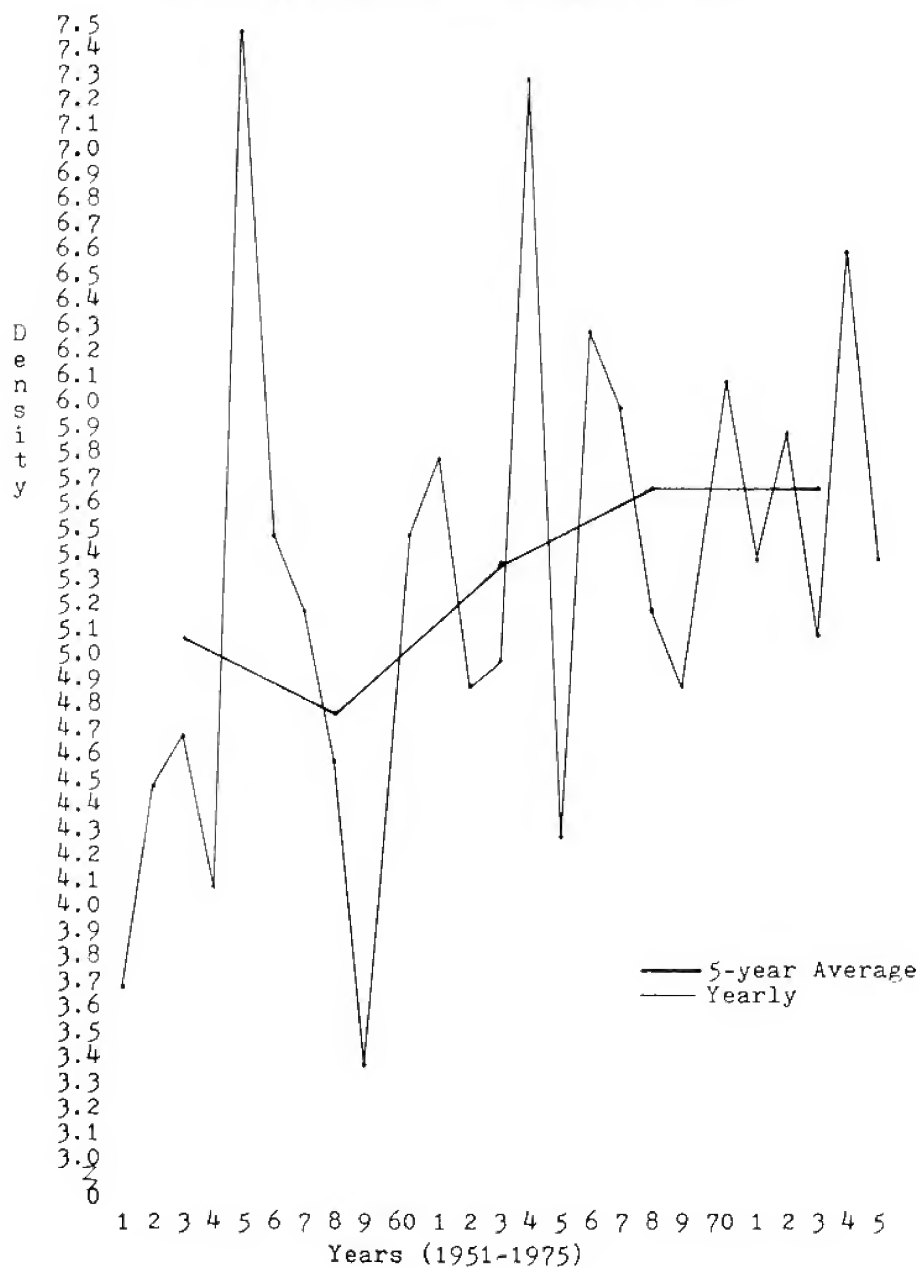
Brown -- "Uncommon permanent resident".

The Pileated Woodpecker was found on 31 percent of the counts, all from the eastern third of Iowa, and comprised 0.7 percent of the total woodpecker numbers. It has increased in frequency (Figure 6). The highest densities were reported from the heavily wooded "driftless" area of northeast Iowa (Figure 8), probably due to the Pileated Woodpeckers preference for highly productive forests (Bock and Lepthien, 1975). Figure 7 shows an increase in density, but the numbers involved are small and may be due to the increase in count effort. The highest number of Pileated Woodpeckers reported on a count was nine at Decorah in 1974.

Table 5
Pileated Woodpecker

Latitude	No. of counts taken	Number observed	%	Density No. per 10 hours	Frequency of occurrence	
					No. of counts	%
43°	63	80	41	0.7	30	48
42°	97	49	25	0.2	30	31
41°	134	57	30	0.1	41	31
40°	45	7	4	0.07	4	9

Figure 9
Yearly and 5-Year Average Densities (#/10 yrs)
of the Red-bellied Woodpecker in Iowa



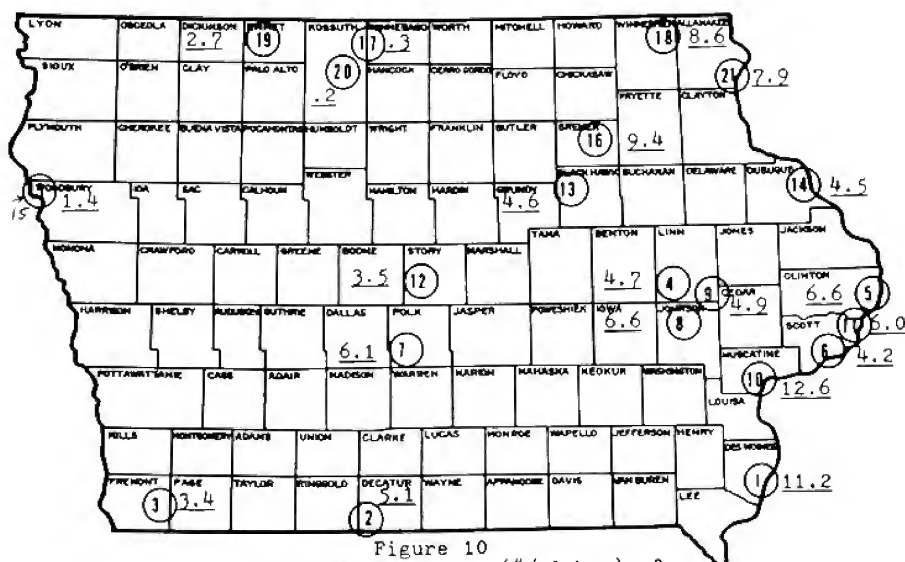
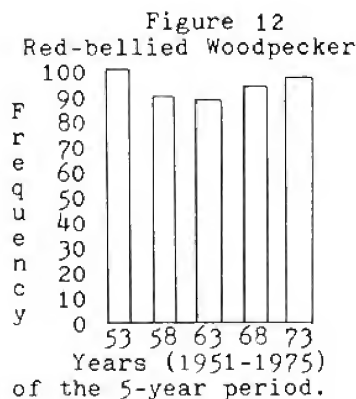
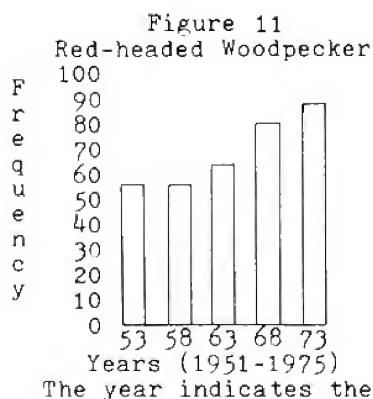


Figure 10
Average Densities (#/10 hrs) of
the Red-bellied Woodpecker at each Count Locality

Table 6
Red-bellied Woodpecker

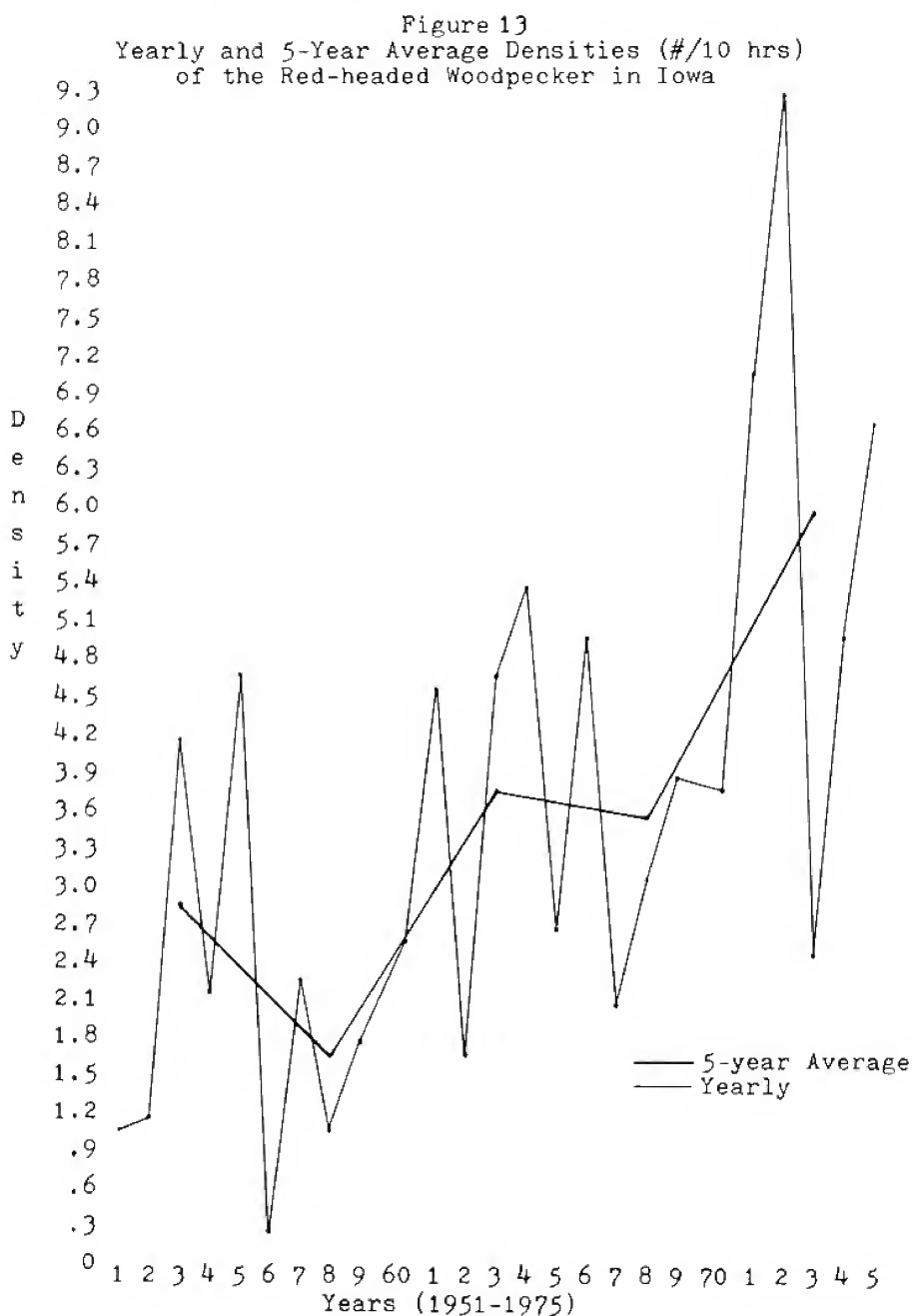
Latitude	No. of counts taken	Number observed	%	Density	Frequency of occurrence	%
				No. per 10 hours	No. of counts	
43°	63	753	14	6.7	49	78
42°	97	809	15	3.8	95	98
41°	134	3142	59	5.7	134	100
40°	45	603	11	5.8	45	100

Figures 11 & 12
Frequency (percent of counts) of Occurrence





Red-headed Woodpeckers - J. F. Laudenberger



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius*

Anderson -- "The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is a common migrant over the whole of Iowa, and a tolerably common summer resident in most parts of the state, especially in the northern parts."

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DuMont -- "A fairly common migrant and a rear summer resident, occasionally remaining in winter in the southern portion."

Brown -- "Common migrant, rare permanent resident."

The sapsucker is highly migratory and most winter south of Iowa. The sapsucker was found on 20 percent of the counts and comprised 0.4 percent of the total woodpecker numbers. It has increased in frequency (Figure 15). It has also increased in density (Figure 17) but the numbers involved are small and may be due to the increase in count effort. The sapsucker has been widely reported in winter (Figure 18), but its density and frequency of occurrence are greatest at 40 degrees (Table 8). The most sapsuckers recorded on a count was five at Davenport in 1964 and 1970.

Figures 15 & 16
Frequency (percent of counts) of Occurrence

Figure 15
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

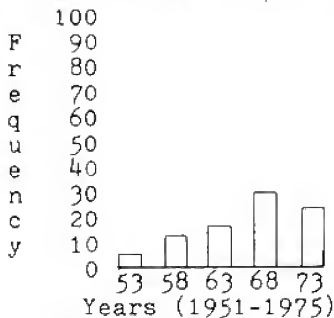
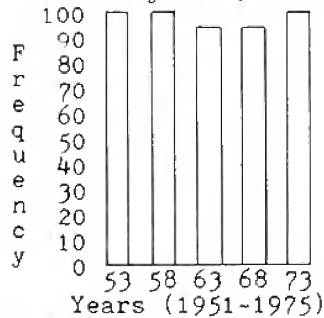


Figure 16
Downy Woodpecker



The year indicates the mid-point of the 5-year period.

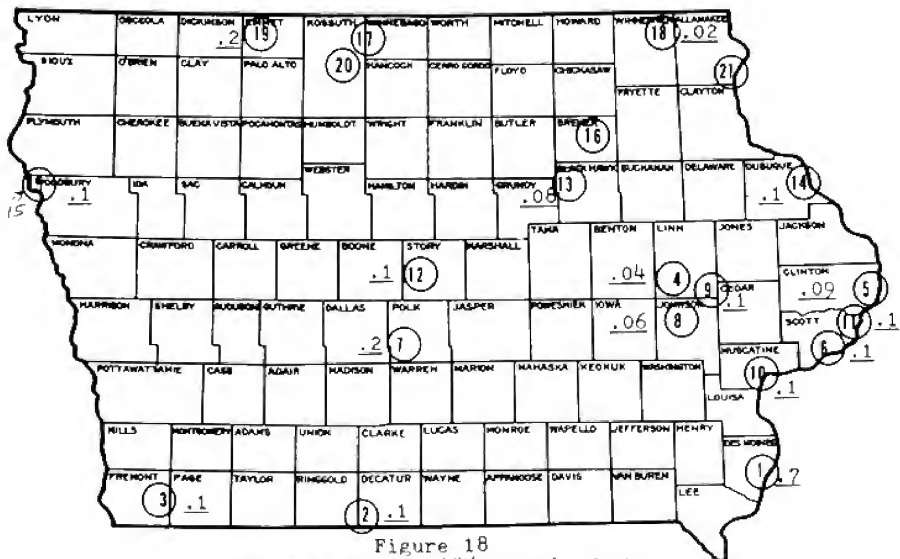


Figure 18
Average Densities (#/10 hrs) of the
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at each County Locality

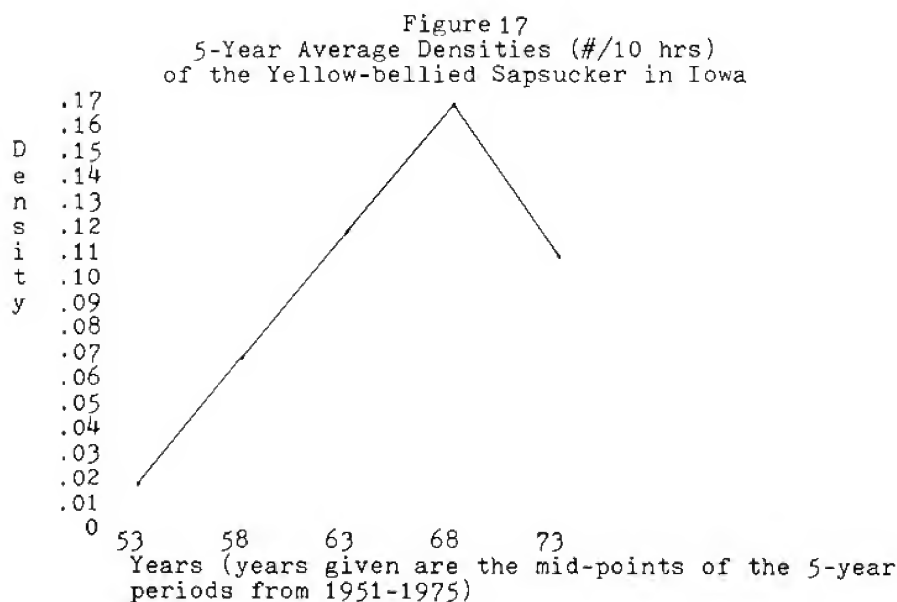


Table 8
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Latitude	No. of counts taken	Number		Density No. per 10 hours	Frequency of occurrence	
		observed	%		No. of counts	%
43°	63	2	2	0.02	2	3
42°	97	17	15	0.08	12	12
41°	134	65	59	0.12	39	29
40°	45	26	24	0.25	15	33

Hairy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos villosus*

Anderson -- "The Hairy Woodpecker is a common resident in all parts of the state, but it most frequently observed in winter, when it often appears in towns."

DuMont -- "A fairly common permanent resident, somewhat more numerous in winter."

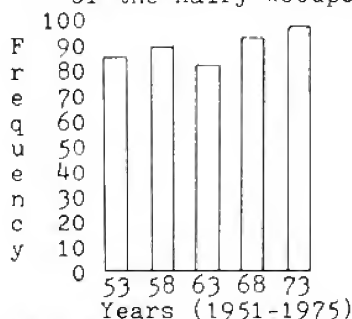
Brown -- "Common permanent resident".

The Hairy Woodpecker comprised 11 percent of the total number of woodpeckers and was found on 92 percent of the counts. It has increased slightly in frequency of occurrence (Figure 19). The Hairy Woodpecker has declined in density during the study period, but may be starting to recover slightly (Figure 20). The highest number of Hairy Woodpeckers reported on a count was 51 at Davenport in 1960. Figure 21 shows that the Hairy is fairly evenly distributed.

Table 9
Hairy Woodpecker

Latitude	No. of counts taken	Number		Density No. per 10 hours	Frequency of occurrence	
		observed	%		No. of counts	%
43°	63	335	12	3.0	48	76
42°	97	827	29	3.9	96	99
41°	134	1501	52	2.7	125	93
40°	45	224	8	2.2	43	96

Figure 19
Frequency (percent of counts) of Occurrence
of the Hairy Woodpecker



Year indicates mid-point of 5-year period.

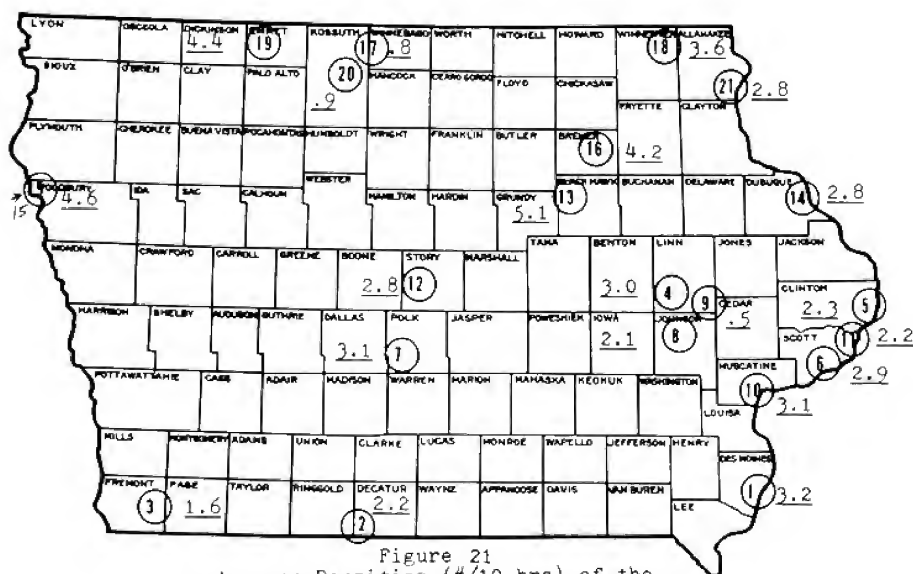


Figure 21
Average Densities (#/10 hrs) of the
Hairy Woodpecker at each County Locality

Downy Woodpecker *Dendrocopos pubescens*

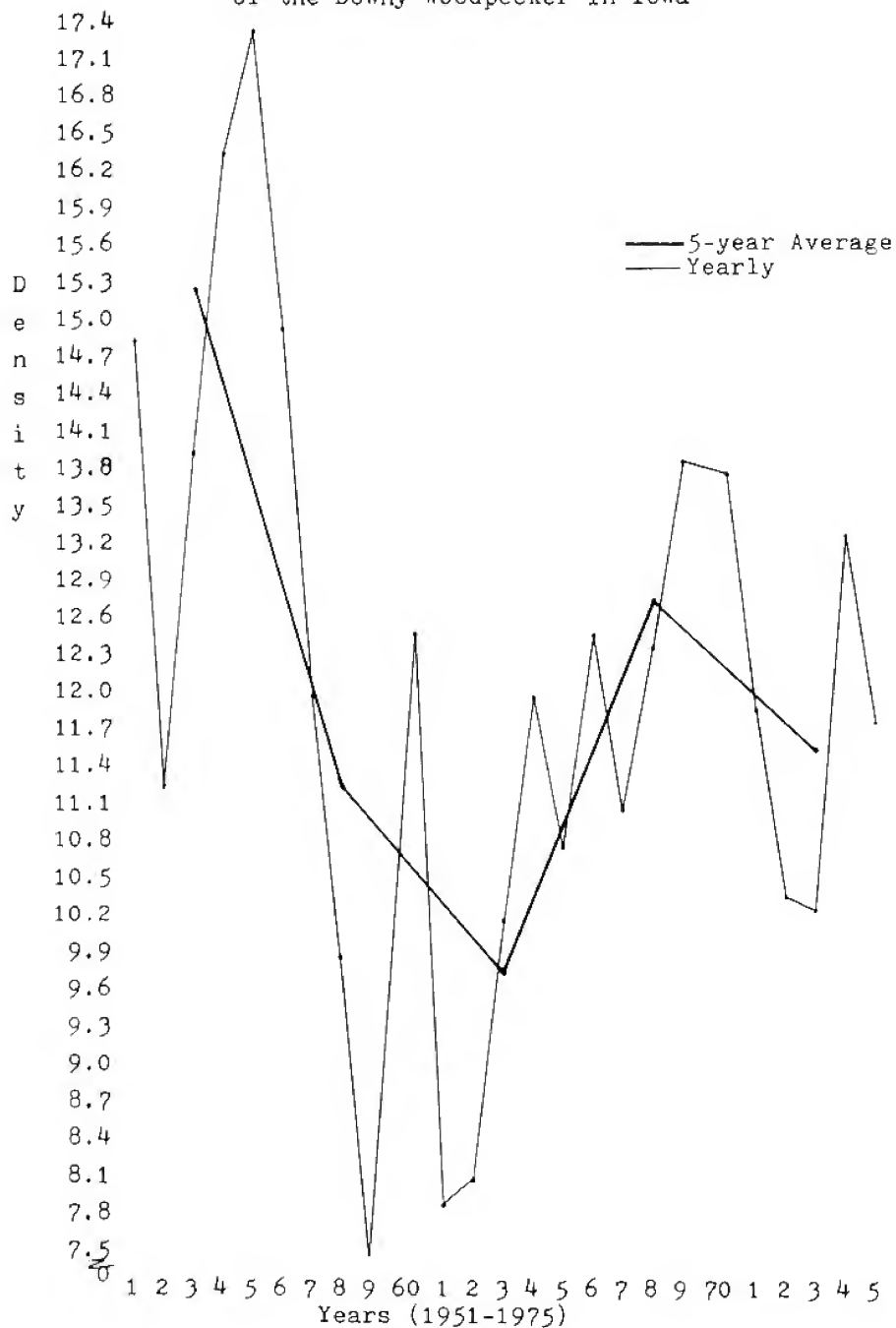
Anderson -- "In general, the Downy Woodpecker is a more abundant resident than the Hairy Woodpecker."

DuMont -- "A common permanent resident, breeding in all parts of the state."

Brown -- "A bundant permanet resident"

The Downy Woodpecker was by far the most abundant species, comprising 42 percent of the total number of woodpeckers and occurring on 98 percent of the counts. It is found in increasing densities from north to south (Table 10), which may indicate some migratory movement. Figure 22 shows a downward trend in Downy Woodpecker densities during the study period. The frequency of occurrence has remained about the same (Figure 16). The highest number of Downy Woodpeckers reported on a count was 186 at Davenport in 1955. The Downy seems to be fairly evenly distributed across the state (Figure 23).

Figure 22
Yearly and 5-Year Average Densities (#/10 hrs)
of the Downy Woodpecker in Iowa

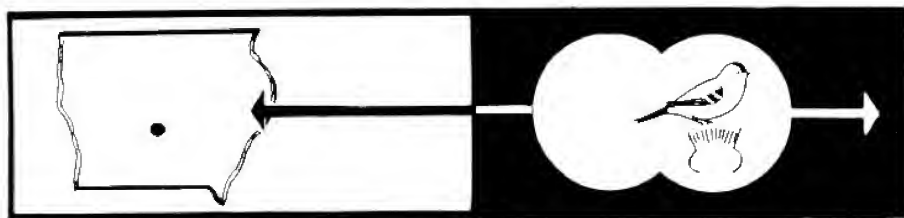


SUMMARY

Two species of woodpeckers (Hairy and Downy) have decreased in density during the study period. The Common Flicker has remained at about the same density (although down slightly) that it was at the beginning of the study. Both the Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers have increased in density. The Pileated Woodpecker and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker have also increased in densities, but probably because of the general increase in the count efforts rather than an increase in actual numbers. The highest woodpecker densities were in the southeast corner of Iowa, with most species generally decreasing to the north (except Pileated and Hairy Woodpeckers) and to the west (except Common Flicker). The author is grateful for the assistance of Dr. James Dinsmore, Dept. of Animal Ecology, Iowa State University, Ames.

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Dallas, Madison and Adair Counties

GENE BURNS
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On Sunday, June 26, 1977, my wife and I checked some of the birding areas in Dallas County. We left Jamaica at 4 p.m. and drove to each corner of the county in addition to the central area. Five hours and 145 miles later, we had accounted for 56 species. We observed 4 Red-tailed Hawks in various places throughout the county and in addition we also made observations of the following "Blue-listed" species: American Kestrel 3, Yellow-billed Cuckoo 1, Common Nighthawk 2, Red-headed Woodpecker 47, Hairy Woodpecker 1, Purple Martin 8, Loggerhead Shrike

1, Grasshopper Sparrow 2, and Vesper Sparrow 2. I urged all "Birders" to be aware of the population trend of the birds in their area and in particular to the "Blue-listed" species. If any serious decline is noted, it should be reported, as "bird-life" is a barometer to many environmental conditions. If a species is in trouble, perhaps advance warning will help to preserve it from further decline.

We found many good birding areas in Dallas County, especially in the northeast and northwest part of the county, near the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. Starting in the southcentral area near Adel and driving several of the roads near the North Raccoon River you will find many places to bird. Traveling from the Adel area on to the southwestern part of the county near Redfield you will come to the South Raccoon River Access where we found several species with the Bobwhite in abundance. On to the Van Meter area and into Trindle Park, just a few species observed here and the park is not very well kept, however just directly east of the park and into the Van Meter Cemetery, we found birding especially good with many species noted including the Orchard Oriole. From Van Meter on to the Booneville area we found several good places along the Raccoon River and several species observed. From Booneville on to the northeastern part of the county and starting about 1½ miles northwest of Granger take the first road off of highway 141 to the right and travel north. About 1½ miles north right after crossing a railroad tracks you will find a wildlife area on the right side of the road. Driving through this area we noted an abundance of species including many Bobwhites, American Kestrels, Loggerhead Shrikes and Orchard Orioles.

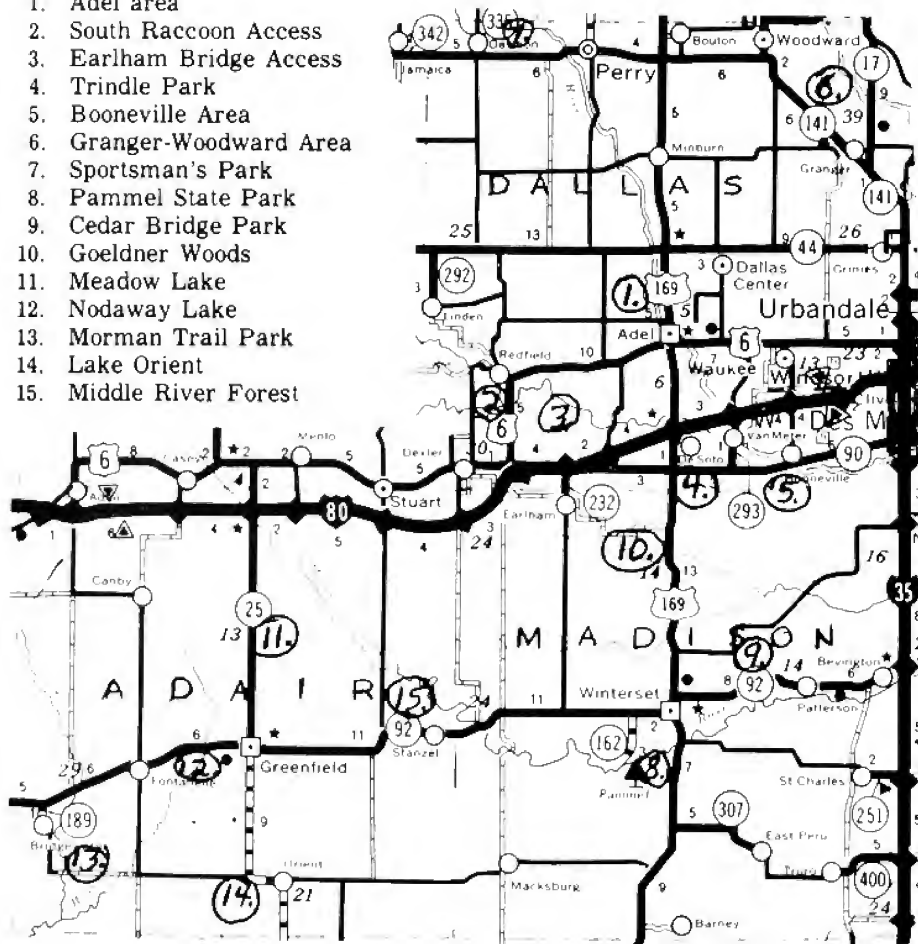
After leaving this area, we made our destination Woodward, but we would bear to the right on every road which headed towards the Des Moines River. Several of these roads are dead-end. This is an excellent drive from Granger to Woodward if you take in all of these dead-end roads. An abundance of species were noted including the Green Heron, Whip-poor-will, Bank, Rough-winged and Barn Swallows, Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches, Wood Thrush, Northern and Orchard Orioles, Indigo Buntings, Grasshopper, Vesper, Chipping, Field and Song Sparrows. Also here is where we had several observations of the beautiful Lark Sparrow. A trip through this area would be well worth your time for a good day of fine birding.

As twilight had arrived and nightfall would soon be upon us we headed for my very favorite spot in Dallas County to Sportsman's Park just east of Dawson. In this park you will find at the west edge of it, a very high bluff which overlooks the North Raccoon River for quite some distance and you can see the surrounding countryside for many miles. Many is the hour that my wife and I have spent on this overlook with our lunch, binoculars, scope and our anticipations. We have always been rewarded for our time spent here in both summer and winter. A Common Screech Owl in the gray phase lives right near the roadway just after you enter the park. You will be talked to by the Red-headed Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Red-eyed Vireos, Eastern Pewees, and many other of the seasonal birds. At the "Overlook", you can expect to find in season, Great Blue Herons, Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Kingfishers, several swallows, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Crested Flycatchers, kinglets, Cedar Waxwings, plus many other species.

If you would like to go "birding" through Dallas, Guthrie, Greene or Carroll Counties, contact me at Jamaica, Iowa and I will tour you for a few hours, a day, or a weekend. It will be my pleasure, and I promise you that you will be rewarded for your time spent.

On Sunday June 12, 1977, my wife and I drove 200 miles to 8 different areas in Madison and Adair counties to check on the birdlife and habitat conditions. During 8 hours of driving and walking, we were able to account for 59 species, of which the following 4 are "Blue-listed". Yellow-billed Cuckoo 1, Red-headed Woodpecker 55, Loggerhead Shrike 1, and Vesper Sparrow 2. We found birding especially good at Meadow Lake and Morman Trail Park in Adair County and at Pammel State Park and Goeldner Woods in Madison County. Other comments which might be of interest are as follows: We passed by 63 farm ponds all supporting birdlife in their area, 29 small streams of which 14 were dry or almost dry, 3 good sized flowing rivers and 1 large water-filled gravel pit area, many acres of wooded areas and lots of good pasture land. Adair County has a marker telling about Henry Wallace located at the entrance to Lake Orient and Madison County has 7 covered bridges throughout the county and covered bridge day is celebrated each August at Winterset.

1. Adel area
2. South Raccoon Access
3. Earlham Bridge Access
4. Trindle Park
5. Booneville Area
6. Granger-Woodward Area
7. Sportsman's Park
8. Pammel State Park
9. Cedar Bridge Park
10. Goeldner Woods
11. Meadow Lake
12. Nodaway Lake
13. Morman Trail Park
14. Lake Orient
15. Middle River Forest



DALLAS COUNTY

1. **Adel area:** Drive to all areas near the North Raccoon River near Adel.
2. **South Raccoon River Access:** located 1 mile south of Redfield, 33 acres with toilets and picnicking facilities.
3. **Earlham Bridge Access:** Located 5 miles southeast of Redfield with no facilities.
4. **Trindle Park and Van Meter Cemetery:** Contains 22 acres and picnicking spots.
5. **Booneville area:** Drive to all areas near the Raccoon River.
6. **Granger-Woodward area:** By driving all dead-end roads leading towards the Des Moines River, you will find a variety of habitat and species. (An excellent birding area).
7. **Sportsman's Park:** Located $\frac{1}{2}$ mile northeast of Dawson, 40 acres with camping, electricity, water, toilets and picnicking.

MADISON COUNTY

8. **Pammel State Park:** Located 2 miles west and 3 miles south of Winterset, acreage unavailable but it is a good sized park with all facilities available. This is a very good birding area where we observed Cliff Swallows, several Tufted Titmice, Red-eyed Vireo, both meadowlarks, Field Sparrows and many other species common to the breeding season.
9. **Cedar Bridge Park:** Located 3 miles northeast of Winterset containing 27 acres. A rocky bottomed stream runs through this park. The park also had a covered bridge in it. Many species observed including Green Heron and Eastern Phoebe on her nest under the highway bridge.
10. **Goeldner Woods:** Located 5 miles southeast of Earlham, containing $44\frac{1}{2}$ acres with no facilities. An excellent birding area. Many species observed including more Green Herons, and we heard 3 Ovenbirds singing, plus a Barred Owl talking to us.

ADAIR COUNTY

11. **Meadow Lake:** Located 6 miles north and 1 mile east of Greenfield, containing 320 acres. Much good habitat around this lake and a good place to go birding. We observed a Spotted Sandpiper, Caspian Tern and a Red-tailed Hawk while in this area in addition to the more common seasonal species.
12. **Nodaway Lake:** Located 2 miles west and 1 mile south of Greenfield with 107 acres, camping, electricity, water, toilets and picnicking. A good area and a nice lake where we observed many of the common seasonal species.
13. **Morman Trail Park:** Located $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles southeast of Bridgewater with camping, electricity, toilets, picnicking and water. A good area where in addition to the more common species, we observed several Eastern Bluebirds and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo at close range.
14. **Lake Orient:** Located one mile west of Orient with camping, electricity, water, toilets and picnicking, containing 86 acres. No trees around this lake and the habitat is best suited to the grassland species. A Loggerhead Shrike was observed just north of this area.
15. **Middle River Forest Area:** Located 3 miles northwest of Stanzil but no facilities. A good place to bird. Turkey Vultures, Bobwhites, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Vesper Sparrows and many other species common to the breeding season observed in this area.

Spring and Summer Observation of Herons in Northwest Iowa, 1977

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During the course of investigations on the behavior and ecology of various marsh birds in northwest Iowa in spring and summer, 1977 I noted the occurrence and relative abundance of herons (*Ciconiiformes*). Sight records for thirteen species of heron have been published for Iowa (Brown, 1971). From 1 April to 25 July 1977 I observed ten of these species in Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, and Palo Alto counties.

On 18 May at Dan Greene Slough, Clay Co. I watched three White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) for 15 minutes using a 15-60x spotting scope. The white facial bordering was quite distinct, even in the fading light of dusk. Palmer (1962:515-516) considers the White-faced and Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) as conspecific (*P. f. chihi* and *P. f. falcinellus* respectively). Brown (1971) treats them accordingly and classed the abundance of this species in Iowa as "casual." The White-faced Ibis is included on the National Audubon Society Blue List (Arbib, 1976). The most recent published sighting for Iowa is 9 May 1975 when two Glossy or White-faced Ibis (two accounts differ as to species) were seen near Black Hawk State Park, Sac Co. (Brown, 1976:56).

A single Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) was seen at Smith's Slough, Clay Co. on 19 May. Listed as "casual in spring" by Brown (1971), this species is still expanding its range in North America and records are becoming more frequent in Iowa (J.J. Dinsmore, pers. comm.).

A Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) was identified at W. Hottes Lake, Dickinson Co. on 28 June. It was observed in good light at a distance of 75 meters, using a 15-60x spotting scope. Leg, foot and bill color were easily visible. Described by Brown (1971) as a "casual summer resident," he reported most recent records from the eastern half of the state with one record for northwest Iowa (Emmet Co.) in May 1957 (Carter, 1957). Perusal of reports in *Iowa Bird Life* and *American Birds* since Brown (1971) showed only six new records; 22 May 1974 near Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie Co. (Kleen, 1974:807), 19 April 1975 at Monona, Clayton Co., 27 April 1975 at Pacific Junction, Mills Co. (Kleen, 1975:859), 6 April and 1 May 1976, no location given (Brown, 1976:56) and 22 May 1976 at Coralville Refuge, Johnson Co. (Halmi, 1976:82). My observation constitutes only the second record for northwest Iowa.

M. A. Whitson and I saw one adult and two immature (differentiated from yearlings) Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*) at Trumbull Lake, Clay Co. on 23 July. Using 7x35 binoculars and a 15-60x spotting scope we watched the birds for 20 minutes at distances ranging from 30-150 m, in bright midday sunshine. On 4 August 1977 M. A. Whitson observed an immature Little Blue at Welsh Lake, Dickinson Co. I have also received an unconfirmed report of "several" Little Blue Herons at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, Kossuth Co. on 23 July 1977 (fide M. A. Whitson). Brown (1971) denoted the species as an "uncommon summer resident." The most recent Iowa sighting I could locate were at Red Rock Lake, Marion Co. (Brown, 1974:71), near Ottumwa, Wapello Co. (Petersen, 1974:38), at Iowa City, Johnson Co. (Kleen, 1975:65), all in spring-summer 1974 and a

previously unpublished record on 21 May 1976 at Ledges State Park, Boone Co. (T. C. Rothe, pers. comm.).

Four Great Egrets (*Casmerodius albus*) were found at Virgin Lake, Palo Alto Co. on 23 and 24 July. Designated an "uncommon breeding bird" by Brown (1971), spring and summer sightings are frequently reported in Iowa Bird Life Field Reports.

An American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) a "rare breeding bird, uncommon migrant" (Brown, 1971), was heard giving its unique courtship call on 28 April at Smith's Slough. 'Singing' was heard from two widely separated locations in Smith's through early May. No nests or young were found. American Bitterns were observed infrequently by J. C. Bednarz, J. J. Dinsmore, T. A. Nigus and me through the summer in the four county area. The American Bittern was added to the Blue List in 1976 and remains on the list in 1977 (Arbib, 1976).

The Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*) was observed occasionally in the Clay-Palo Alto Co. region throughout the summer. Two nests were located at Dewey's Pasture, Clay Co. in 1976, but none were found in 1977 (Ryan, pers. obs.). Brown (1971) classed the Least Bittern as an "uncommon breeding bird." The extremely shy nature of this species may mask its true abundance.

Green Herons (*Butorides virescens*) are listed by Brown (1971) as "common breeding birds" and they were seen regularly in proper habitat throughout the spring and summer. The earliest sighting was 4 May at Smith's Slough. One nest was found at Dewey's Pasture (W. Souer, pers. comm.).

Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) were seen rarely in April and May, but sightings increased in frequency as summer progressed. This is likely related to widespread post-breeding dispersal exhibited by this species (Palmer, 1962:396). I am not aware of any active Great Blue Heron breeding colonies in northwest Iowa.

Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) were very common in the four county area this year. Good numbers were regularly observed at Barringer's Slough, Clay Co., W. Swan Lake, Emmet Co., Cheever Lake, Emmet Co. and at a nesting colony discovered at W. Hottes Lake (for details see Nigus, 1977).

The only heron species previously recorded for Iowa that I did not see in northwest Iowa this year are the Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*), Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*), and Roseate Spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*). The latter two species are each known from single occurrences (Brown, 1971). The Yellow-crowned Night Heron is classed as a "rare breeding bird" by Brown (1971).

Thanks to J. C. Bednarz, J. J. Dinsmore, T. A. Nigus, T. C. Rothe, W. Souer and M. A. Whitson for use of unpublished records. J. J. Dinsmore offered many helpful suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper.

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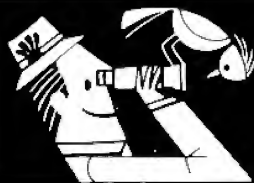
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FIELD REPORTS



Summer 1977

The species marked with an * are on the National Audubon Blue List (*Am. Birds* 30:1031, 1976), the Iowa Blue List (*I.B.L.* 45:95, 1975) and-or on Dean Roosa's list of endangered, threatened or declining species in Iowa (*I.B.L.* 46:40, 1976).

General Comments. The temperature and rainfall in June were about average. July was one of the hottest on record, and precipitation over the state had a crazy-quilt pattern: not even those places with torrential downpours had enough moisture to replenish the deficit built up over the many months of the drought. The ensuing report is probably the most informative in years because of the nature of the contributions received. A recently neglected area, the Iowa Great Lakes Region, was well covered by Dr. Dinsmore and his associates. Ross Silock, Dean Roosa and Jon Stravers conducted an in-depth survey of the bird population of Washington Township, Fremont Co. June 3-7, and highlights of their "Iowa Foray 1977" will be summarized. Joe Schaufenbuel observed some startling late departures and early arrivals in n.e. Iowa; he and Darwin Koenig also made significant observations in the course of a 1200-mile trip across Iowa in early July. A 2-day Mississippi boat trip by the Petersens in late July paid handsome dividends.

Abbreviations used. CoR: Coralville Reservoir; DGS: Dan Green Slough, Clay Co.; HHP: Hickory Hill Park, Iowa City; IGLR: Iowa Great Lakes Region (used to encompass Dickinson, Emmet, Clay and Palo Alto Counties); RRR: Red Rock Lake, Reservoir and Refuge; WFF: Washington Twp., Fremont Co. Foray; YRF: Yellow River Forest; L.: Lake; M.: Marsh; N.W.R.: National Wildlife Refuge; S.P.: State Park.

Grebes through Bitterns. An Eared Grebe was seen at W. Okoboji July 9 (R. Storer fide MR). Pied-billed Grebes were common nesters in the IGLR, but their nesting success was poor because of low water levels (JD). They were also breeding at Cardinal M., but the breeding population in n.e. Iowa seems to be declining (JS). There were a number of *Am. White Pelicans seen in July: 8 in the IGLR, July 8-25 (MR), 13 at Sweet M. (R. Robinson fide JS), and 21 at Union Slough N.W.R., Kossuth Co., July 2 (DK,JS). There were these reports concerning *Double-crested Cormorants: 8 at DGS, June 2 (JD,TN), one at Lily L., Dickinson Co. (T. Taylor and D. Padget fide DH), about 8 nests in the colony north of Clinton, July 26 (PP), one bird at Sweet M., in the northeast, June 8 (JS), and 2 in the opposite corner of the state, at Riverton, on June 6 (RS). In June, Great Blue Herons were seen in several places, with a maximum of 12 at RRR (GB); flocking started in mid-July near the CoR and at Cone M.; Petersen saw "many" at the Sabula colony on July 26. Three Little Blue Herons occurred at Trumbull L. on July 23 (MR). A Cattle Egret observed on June 2 at Dewey's Pasture may have been the same as that seen on May 30 at DGS (JD,TN); another was encountered on June 16 in Marshall Co. (D. Van Waus fide JD). Great Egrets were sighted in the n.e. corner of the state (June 20-July 6, up to 15, DK,JB), at RRR (2 on July 2, JSt), in the IGLR (total of 9, June 3-July 25, JD,TN,MR), and near Guttenberg (12 on July 26, PP). The only Snowy Egret reported was on June 28 at W. Hottes L. in the IGLR (MR). *Black-crowned Night Herons were found in the northeast, 2 at Cardinal M. on June 11 (DK), and 4 adults with 2 immatures, suggesting breeding, at Sweet M. on June 8 (JS), north-central area (10 at Union Slough N.W.R. on July 2, DK and JS), and, with a vengeance, in the IGLR, where 18 nests were counted on W. Hottes L. (DH), and the total number of birds there and in nearby marshes was put at over 100 (JD). There was also evidence of breeding of Yellow-crowned Night Herons in the state: 7 adults and 2 juveniles were found at Johnson's Bottom, Lucas Co., in early July (RG); singles were reported from Shimek State Forest (July 2, RD), and near the CoR (early July, HO; this may have been the same bird seen by many in April-May); 3 were seen in the n.e. corner of Iowa, near New Albin, in June (JB). Search of proper habitat revealed some Least Bitterns in the IGLR (but no nests, JD), at Riverton, June 6 (RS), and 6 at Sweet M. on June 8 (JS). A few *Am. Bitterns were present in the IGLR (JD); apparently none were observed elsewhere.

Waterfowl. The biggest news item should have been covered in the June issue, but it did not come to our attention until late July (Jack Musgrove fide WB): the capturing of a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck by employees of the Conservation Commission south of Clear L., Cerro Gordo Co., on May 8 (see longer note and photographs with editorial comment). This appears to be only the second record outside (of course) Texas, Louisiana, Arizona and California (one in Illinois according to Peterson's Eastern Guide). The line between the Conservation Commission and I.B.L. is obviously far from "hot"! Up to 4 Gadwalls were seen n. of Ruthven, as late as June 23 (JD,TN,MR), and breeding was suspected; 2 at Sweet M., June 8, were probably stragglers (JS). Com. Pintails were observed regularly in small numbers near Ruthven up to at least June 10 (JD,TN,MR). Am. Green-winged Teals were present at Sweet M. through most of June; one was at Cardinal M. on July 10 (JS); 3 were encountered at Union Slough N.W.R. on July 2 (DK,JS); they occurred regularly near Ruthven up to July 9 (JD,TN,MR); 2 molting birds were at Elk L. on July 23 (JD). Three male Am. Wigeons in the IGLR on June 10 were unexpected (JD), as was a female at Sweet M. on June 28 (JS). N. Shovelers were regular up to June 10 at DGS and Mud L. (JD,TN,MR); a female was seen during the WFF (RS). Redheads were found with broods in the IGLR (JD). Two male Ring-necked Ducks tarried at Cardinal M. on June 11 (DK). Five

Canvasback ducks with broods of 2-4 were discovered on Mud L., Clay Co., June 22 (DH,R. Howing). Up to 3 Lesser Scaups were found with regularity June 10-23 on Mud L. (JD, TN,MR). A female Bufflehead on the very shallow Goose L., Clinton Co., July 23 was a baffling summer first for Petersen. Ruddy Ducks bred in the IGLR; one drake was observed at Sweet M. up to June 20 (JS). A Hooded Merganser with ducklings was at YRF on June 11, and a female on June 19 at Carinal M. (DK); one in a eclipse plumage was on Marble L., July 20 (MR). Two yearling Red-breasted Mergansers were seen at Dewey's Pasture Clay Co., June 1 (MR).

Diurnal Raptors. Several roosts of Turkey Vultures were reported: 28 by the Raccoon River (DS), 20-30 at RRR (GB), 17 seen during the WFF (Dean Roosa fide RS), and 30-40 s. of Bellevue on July 26 (PP). Nobody seems to have seen a *Sharp-shinned Hawk. Koenig had a corner on *Cooper's: one at Harpers Ferry on July 8, and 2 with flying young near Marquette, July 29. There were several reports of Red-tailed Hawks from all over the state: the highest number was 9 pairs around RRR (GB). As to breeding, 2 nests failed at RRR, one succeeded (GB); 2 nests were found (DM), and a family group with 2 young was seen on July 26 between Dubuque and Guttenberg (PP). Three pairs of *Red-shouldered Hawks with young along the Mississippi in extreme n.e. Iowa were followed (JB); there were adults with young in 3 other n. e. Iowa localities too (DK); an immature was seen in July in Guthrie Co. (DS). A total of 9 *Broad-winged Hawks was recorded from n.e. Iowa during the period (DK,JB); one was reported from Iowa City, June 7 (RD); 3 were at Ledges S.P. on July 2, and breeding was considered possible (JD). A Bald Eagle was observed over N. Buena Vista on July 26 (PP). Small numbers of *N. Harriers were observed; in the Iowa City area, nesting of one pair was suspected and the nest of another pair, with 3 young, was found and photographed (see longer note). When checked again on July 23, it was deserted (MN). Single *Ospreys were seen, over Ingham L., Emmet Co., June 2 (TN), and near Camanche, July 27 (another summer first for PP). There were many reports of *Am. Kestrels, none of them very encouraging, and several negative. They nested at Davenport (PP), but not, as in past years, in Dean Mosman's territory. Their number in the northeast was "fairly good" (JS), and of the 20 seen during the early July trip, 15 were in the northern tier of counties (DK, JS).

Quails through Shorebirds. Unlike those in Illinois, the populations of Com. Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasant in Iowa seemed to have come through the terrible winter unscathed, evidently because of the lack of a heavy snow cover. Five hen Wild Turkeys with at least 29 chicks were located in n.e. counties (DK, JB). The turkey population near Dubuque was up (R. Walton fide GC). Virginia Rails were calling at Sweet M. through June (JS); chicks were found in late June and July at Hottes and Marble LL. (MR). The Sora population in the IGLR was sparse (JD); Martha Whitson saw one chick in mid-July at Hottes L. (fide JD). A Com. Gallinule was seen at Smith Slough June 24-25 (TN,MR). Am. Coots nested in the IGLR (JD); one chick was also found in Fremont Co. (RS); 40 were counted N. of Dubuque on July 26 (PP). Semipalmated Plovers lingered east and west: until June 8 at Sweet M. (JS) and June 10 at DGS (JD). More Am. Woodcocks were found during this summer than in most years, including several in the northwest (JD, TN,MR). This probably was due to better exploration and more chance encounters than to population changes. Reports of *Upland Sandpipers came from around the state, with 2 instances of documented nesting (Gene Armstrong fide WB,D. Gillaspay fide GB). The total count was about 30. The greatest density seems to have been in the n.e. counties, where 12 were seen (DK), and w. of Jamaica, where there were 4 (GeB). This summer, the period between the

departure and return of migrant sandpipers was exceptionally short. Solitary Sandpipers set a record by reappearing at Meyer L. on June 26 (JS), and by July 30 46 were counted at Cone M. (MN). A Willet on July 11 at Sweet M. was also quite unusual (JS). Were the 10 Greater Yellowlegs on June 23 at Rush L., Osceola Co., and the 8 Lesser Yellowlegs on June 25 at Virgin L., Palo Alto Co. (JD,TN,MR), coming or going? The 2 Baird's at Big Creek L., Polk Co., on July 15 (WB) were obviously southbound. The 3 Least Sandpipers in n.e. counties on June 26 (JS) were way ahead of schedule. The 21 Dunlins at DGS June 2-6 (JD,TN,MR) must have been northbound stragglers. But what about the Short-billed Dowitcher at Sweet M. on June 27-28, in breeding plumage, and calling (JS)? Or the Long-billed Dowitcher, also identified by call, and in winter plumage, there on June 19-20 (JS)? Several Stilt Sandpipers at Big Creek L. on July 15 (WB) presented no such puzzle. Semipalmated Sandpipers were in no hurry to fly north: about 500 at DGS on June 2 (JD,TN), and one at Sweet M. as late as June 24 (JS). Two female Wilson's Phalaropes were last seen at DGS on June 16 (JD,TN,MR); July 22-23 sightings were one at Cone M. (NH) and 6 at Elk L., Clay Co. (MR). Twelve N. Phalaropes at DGS on June 2 (JD,TN) were remarkable as regards number, date and location.

Gulls through Owls. Ring-billed Gulls summered in the IGLR, with a high count of 37 at Silver L. on June 23 (JD,TN,MR); Mississippi sightings were at Lansing (12 on July 6, DK) and Princeton (4 on July 27, PP). Franklin's Gulls, in groups of 20-40, were common June 11-July 25 in the IGLR (JD,TN,MR). Nests of Forster's Terns with young were photographed on June 21 on W. Hottes L. (DH). The high count there was 60 birds (JD); 4 were seen at Cardinal M. on July 7 (DK), and 6 at Sweet M., where one spent all summer, on July 22; 22 were at RRR most of July (JSt). A Com. Tern was n. of Dubuque on July 26 and 2 at Bettendorf next day (PP). Six *Little Terns were flying south n. of Sabula on July 26 (whence, whereto?) (PP). At RRR, 5 Caspian Terns occurred on July 7 (JSt). Twenty-five Black Terns spent most of July there (JSt). These were common breeders, with little nesting success because of low water levels, in the IGLR (JD). Small groups (2-4 birds) were seen in July by others too (GeB,JS,PP). Helen Peasley saw a Ringed Turtle-Dove in Des Moines, July 15-23 (see longer note, fide WB). Where do these birds materialize from? The Mourning Dove, not usually mentioned in these notes, became a topic of conversation (to put it mildly) when the Conservation Commission declared an open season on it. There were numerous reports on *Yellow-billed and *Black-billed Cuckoos, with the former apparently having the edge. The most optimistic note came from the WFF, which prompted Silcock to label both "common breeders" in his corner of the state. The only report on owls that was not routine was that of a *Short-eared Owl on July 7 in Guthrie Co. (DS).

Goatsuckers through Swallows. *Com. Nighthawks were deemed scarce (GB). They seem to be largely confined to urban areas. Numerous correspondents remarked on the scarcity or lack of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in the field. The only concentrations reported were at feeders (8 on June 2 near Greenfield, GeB; 4 in Gladys Black's area). This species should be monitored! The same can be said for the Belted Kingfisher, which was quite sporadic, with one nest mentioned (DM). The Pileated Woodpecker is doing well in the northeast, with nesting observed near Dubuque (R. Walton fide GC), and 4-7 seen on day-long trips (DK). The consensus is that *Red-headed Woodpeckers are abundant. Many immatures were seen this year. The summer stronghold of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Iowa is the northeast, where they were called "common" in early June (JB), and where 2 nests were found (near Marquette, DK); they also occur in the n.w. corner of the state (one seen in Gitchie-Manitou S.P., July 2, DK and JS). Most contributors had a hard time finding *Hairy Woodpeckers; the 1:1.8 Hairy-Downy ratio reported by Koenig is therefore noteworthy. W. Kingbirds again made it to

the center of the state: one in W. Des Moines, and 2 at Ankeny (GB,DM). They are more common than the * in the Field Check List suggests in the western counties: 4 along a 15-mile stretch in Fremont Co., July 7 (RS); 14 in w. Monona and Harrison Counties, July 2 (DK,JS), outnumbered by a factor of no more than 2 by E. Kingbirds. Reports on E. Phoebes are not cheery, so it is a relief to see them labeled "fairly common breeders" in Fremont Co. (RS). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, identified also by call, was observed in St. Lucas on June 7, rather late (JS). Acadian Flycatchers were doing well in the northeast and the southwest: 7 s.e. of St. Lucas, June 4 (JS), 10 nests found (DK), and "common" in Waubonsie S.P. (RS), with a nest found by Mrs. De Long; several territorial males were also observed in the centrally located Guthrie Co. (DS). Willow Flycatchers were heard in June in HHP (TS), "very common" in the Ruthven area (JD), and more common than last year near Davenport (PP). Alder Flycatchers on the WFF (June 4) were judged to be migrants (RS). Least Flycatchers are hardly standard summer fare in Iowa: this year, one was at Meyer L. on June 4 (JS), one sang on July 1 in Guthrie Co. (DS), 2 were in the YRF, 6 more in other n.e. Iowa areas into mid- and late June (DK,JS), and one in the yard July 20 and 22 (PP). Olive-sided Flycatchers straggled (June 3 by the Missouri, RS; June 8 in Fayette Co., JS); or returned early (one in HHP July 25, RD). Tree Swallows, irregular nesters in Iowa, were common all summer near Iowa City (NH et al.) and nested in Riverton (RS). The news about * Cliff Swallows was good, with these exceptions: nesting failures were noted along the bridge at RRR (GB,JSt), and in Fremont Co. only 5-10 out of 75 nests were occupied (RS). * Purple Martins did well in Dubuque (GC), Iowa City (NH et al.), Davenport (PP), and Elkhart (DM), but were down at RRR (GB) and absent from the Jamaica area (GeB).

Crows through Shrikes. The number of crows seems to have been increasing. It is therefore surprising that Burns found them substantially reduced during his peregrinations in search of information for an IBL site guide in a 11-county area in w. Iowa. Not unexpectedly, in view of the severe winter, there were few reports of Carolina Wrens away from human habitation: one in Guthrie Co., early July (DS) and one at Ledges S.P., June 8 (JD). Four Veeries sang into early July near St. Lucas (JS); 9 more were found in other n.e. Iowa areas in June (DK), with a nest in Brush Creek Canyon; another bird was observed in late June in Guthrie Co. (DS). The reports on E. Bluebirds are a mixed bag: none or few found by most, but more common than last year in Guthrie Co. (DS), 14 nests successful near Wildcat Den (PP), 12-15 near Dubuque (R. Walton fide GC), and 50 plus nestlings (DM). * Loggerhead Shrikes were absent from most of the state, or very scarce at best, with these exceptions: 3 pairs s.e. of Pleasantville (GB), one pair for every 5-7 miles in the Lamoni area (D. Gillaspey fide GB), and, with only 4 in the 11-county area, a "pocket" near Jamaica (GeB).

Vireos through Warblers. Up to 3 singing White-eyed Vireos were found in HHP June 12-July 25 (RD); and adult and an immature occurred at Cone M. on June 12 (RD); a male near Pandora sang into early June (DS). Up to 3 *Bell's Vireos in suitable habitat were reported by several contributors from widely scattered locations; the WFF revealed them to be "common" in the extreme southwest (RS). The breeding population of this species in Iowa appears to be stable. A shortage of the commoner vireos was noted in central areas (WB,DM). A surprising number of warblers that ordinarily only migrate through the state stayed on in small numbers to "enjoy" our summer. A Black-and-white Warbler was in HHP on June 12 (NH), in mid-June in Guthrie Co. (DS), at Pikes Peak on June 11 (DK), and 2 were seen in Fremont Co. June 3-4 (J. and D. Boles fide RS); on June 7, Mrs. DeLong found an adult feeding a young at Waubonsie S.P. (fide RS). Seventeen Prothonotary Warblers were counted at Rathbun L. in early July (WB, Charlotte

Scott). A Worm-eating Warbler, not considered territorial, was seen in Waubonsie S.P. on June 7 (RS). Golden-winged Warblers were found on July 29, one in YRF, and another near Lock and Dam No. 9 (DK). Blue-winged Warblers were called "numerous" in n.e. Iowa (DK); two were seen in the Iowa City area, June 19 (MN); one was reported from Polk Co., where they are rare (W. Boller fide WB). Most reports mention a few * Yellow Warblers, but there were 42 (21 in 1976) along a 2½-mile stretch of Bloody Run Creek, and many others in n. e. locations (DK); they were also common around Trumbull L. (JD) and on the WFF (RS). There is certainly no evidence for a further decline of the population of this warbler in Iowa. Two Cerulean Warblers were reported from the St. Lucas area in early June (JS); some apparently nested in Palisades Kepler S.P., where they were seen on June 18 (RD). A singing Blackburnian Warbler on the late date of June 5 was unusual (JS). There may be a few isolated Yellow-throated Warblers breeding in Ledges S.P., where they were reported from in recent years, and last in May; 2 males were observed there on July 4 (DK,JS). A Chestnut-sided Warbler at Pikes Peak on June 11 was unexpected (DK). Louisiana Waterthrushes were seen in northeast and southwest localities: 4 near St. Lucas, June 3-4, more than 10 in various other northeast places (DK), and 2-3 pairs, one with young, on the WFF (RS). The few summering Kentucky Warblers recorded spanned the state; their number was down in n.e. Iowa (DK), where they are regular; one sang on June 15 at the Macbride Field Campus (NH), and another was found at Waubonsie S.P. on July 3 (DK,JS). Reports on * Yellow-breasted Chats were above average: 2 in HHP June 12-July 16 (NH,RD), a nest at Dubuque (R. Walton fide GC), and 4 in various n.e. Iowa locations (DK,JS). The only Hooded Warbler recorded stayed into July at Marquette (DK). The distribution pattern of the *Am. Redstart is evidently quite uneven: only a few in Des Moines (WB), many at Palisades Kepler S.P. and the northeast (DK), and not seen on the WFF, although known to be common at DeSoto Bend N.W.R. and in e. Nebraska. "I don't understand this bird!" (RS).

Blackbirds through Sparrows. Petersen's breeding bird surveys lent substance to the suspicion (see June issue) that both meadowlarks had declined (Eastern: 11 vs. 29 in 1976; Western: 102 vs. 153). Some Yellow-headed Blackbirds were present in extreme n.e. Iowa in early June (JB); the new colony n. of Dubuque contained some 20 pairs (GC); colony desertions due to low water levels were reported from Lakin Slough (GeB), Ankeny (DM) and Taylor L. (RS). This was a good summer for Orchard Orioles. There were 5 pairs in the Iowa City area, with one nest observed (MN et al.) and another supported by strong circumstantial evidence (HO,NH); they nested in Alburnett (LS) and at Big Creek L. (WB); a pair was seen near Pleasantville (GB); they were "numerous" in the 11-county area (HeB); "several" in June at Scott Co. Park (D. Corbin fide PP); Koenig and Schaufenbuel counted 10 on their July trip, and they were dubbed "common" on the basis of the WFF (RS). Scarlet Tanagers were seen in largest numbers in n.e. Iowa, where 23 territorial males were counted in June at Brush Creek Canyon (DK). The only reports of Summer Tanagers came from Waubonsie S.P. (a few singing males in early June, RS). Blue Grosbeaks are reasonably common in the far west: 5 in Plymouth and Woodbury Counties, July 2 (DK,JS) and 12 in w. Monona and Harrison Counties, July 2-3 (GeB); a nest with 2 young observed near Coon Rapids June 14-22 was more unusual (GeB), as was a sighting in early June in the Cedar Rapids area (Weir Nelson fide MN). Dickcissel numbers reflected habitat faithfully; they were few where habitat was restricted (WB), and exceptionally numerous where weeds had grown tall around receded bodies of water, as in Fremont Co. (RS), Guthrie Co. (DS) and around the CoR (NH). The same conditions also favored the breeding of Savannah Sparrows. Where there were

enough hayfields, *Grasshopper Sparrows were also plentiful, but cultivation is encroaching on them. Two *Henslow's Sparrows were seen on June 23 near Decorah (DK), one at Cresco on July 11 (JS), and up to 6 at Hayden Prairie into mid-July (JF,JS). There is no obvious pattern to abundance of *Vesper Sparrows, monitored carefully because of their newly acquired Blue List status: "common" in Guthrie Co. (DS, GeB), "very common" along roadsides in the IGLR (JD), but reduced in the northeast (JS), uncommon on the WFF (RS), sparse near Des Moines (WB), and not seen around Iowa City (NH). Only small numbers of Lark Sparrows were reported. An adult male Harris' Sparrow in full spring plumage was observed at Smith Slough, Clay Co., June 9-15 (JD,TN,MR), way south of its normal summer range. Swamp Sparrows bred in good numbers in northern marshes (Sweet, Cardinal, Union Slough) (DK,JS).

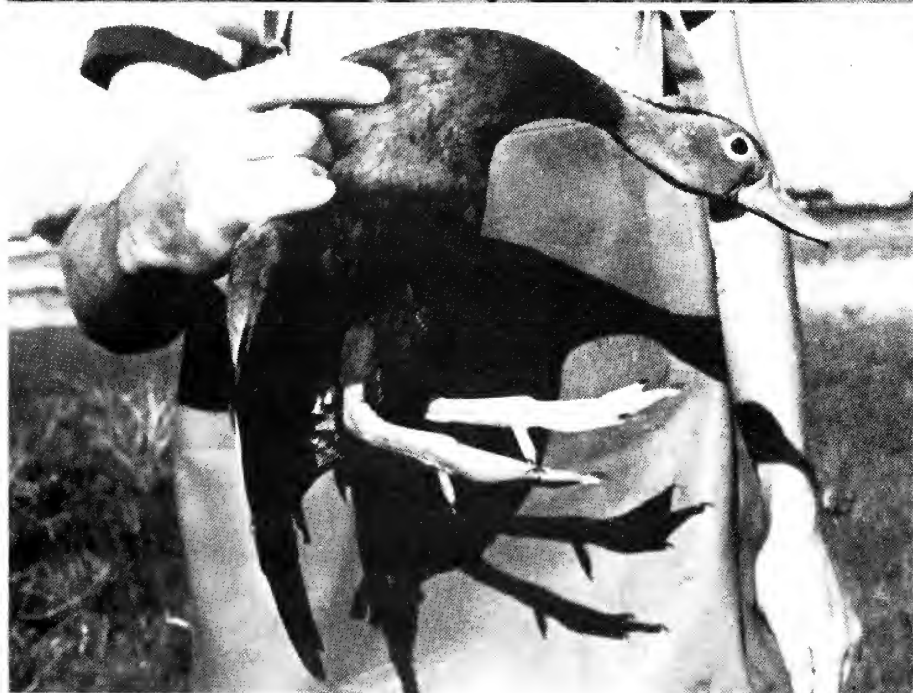
Contributors. Jim Bednarz, Ames; Gladys Black, Pleasantville; Woodward Brown, Des Moines; Gene Burns, Jamaica; George Crossley, Dubuque; Rich DeCoster, Iowa City; James Dinsmore, Ames; Joan Fowler, Rochester, Minn.; Ronnie George, Chariton; Nicholas Halmi, Iowa City; Douglas Harr, Lester; Darwin Koenig, Decorah; Dean Mosman, Elkhart; Mike Newlon, Iowa City; Tom Nigus, Ames; Helen Osmundson, Iowa City; Peter Petersen, Davenport; Mark Ryan, Ames; Joe Schaufenbuel, St. Lucas; Lillian Serbousek, Cedar Rapids; W. Ross Silcock, Malvern; Tom Shires, Iowa City; Dean Stauffer, Ames; Jon Stravers, Pella. N.S. HALMI, R No. 6, IOWA CITY, IA. 52240.

Field Reports editor's note to contributors. Since the June issue was published too late to be available to contributors to this report, I wish to reiterate my requests made in it. I would also like to encourage you to turn in your reports as soon after the end of the fall period (November 30) as possible. I am operating against stringent deadlines set by both IBL and Am. Birds, and if I am forced to wait for late reports, as I was this time (all may not even be in yet), the quality of the product will suffer because of the haste. Consider that the above report was written between 6 p.m. August 8 and 10:30 a.m. August 9!

GENERAL NOTES



Black-bellied Whistling Duck, a new species for Iowa -- Early this summer two employees of the Iowa Conservation Commission captured, photographed and released a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis autumnalis*) while assisting with a waterfowl research project at Zirbel Slough, a county-owned marsh area in Cerro Gordo county about five miles south of Clear Lake, Iowa. The employees, Ken Reynolds and De Wayne Jackson, captured the bird in a baited trap used to capture Mallards for marking and study in the research project. It was an adult female and was taken on the morning of May 8, 1977. The bird was photographed, but was not banded since bands were not readily available and they did not want to hold it in captivity.



Black-bellied Whistling Duck

Photos by Ken Reynolds, Iowa Conservation Commission

Close examination of the specimen by Reynolds and Jackson (both are trained biologists) indicated that the bird was undoubtedly wild and not an escapee from a game breeder. Neither the feathers nor the feet showed any indication that the bird had ever been confined. It appeared to be fully as wild as the native species with which it was associating. There are no known game breeders in the area who have this species in their collections. I am satisfied that it was a wild bird and a new species for the state. BOB BARRATT, Wildlife Superintendent, Iowa Conservation Commission, 300 4th Street, Des Moines.

Field Reports Editor's comment. On the basis of the information in the above note and the accompanying illustrations, the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was accepted by the I.O.U Checklist Committee and added in proof to the official Iowa Checklist (I.B.L. XLVII:32, 1977). Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks are in Ryan's Category IV ("abundant in collections") (Birding 3:159-60, 1972), which form "the overwhelming majority of releases and-or escapes", and for which, in Ryan's opinion, "validity of records (is) nearly impossible to verify or discredit". N.H.

Nest of Northern Harrier on Williams Prairie, Johnson Co. -- On June 18, two ladies photographing wildflowers on Williams Prairie came upon a raptor nest with young, and saw what they believed to be Short-eared or Long-eared Owls flying away from it. They notified Mike Newlon, who next day organized and led a posse consisting of the Calvin Knights, Carol Newlon, Rich DeCoster and me to locate the nest. The Knights arrived on the scene early, and told us they had seen a Northern Harrier soaring nearby. We did not appreciate the portent of this sighting. Because of vague descriptions of the nest site, we combed the 20 acres of the prairie for an hour in vain. Finally, Bernie Knight suggested that we explore the northwest corner, where the nest was not supposed to be. Sure enough, Rich shortly found the nest with three downy young, one dwarfing the other two (see photo, taken by the author with a camera borrowed from Fred Kent). Having agreed that the nest of a Long-eared Owl would not be on the ground in tall grass, we waited for "Short-eared Owls" to materialize. Instead, we now noted two Northern Harriers, and the female moved closer and closer. We became gradually convinced that the discoverers of the nest had misidentified Northern Harriers as owls, even though the female failed to alight near the nest to claim it as her own, and the male never even approached it. None of us had first-hand experience with baby harriers vs. owls, or we would have noticed right away that the largest nestling's eyes were definitely not facing forward, as they do in owls of all ages (photo). Consultation of Bent, Roberts' *The Birds of Minnesota* and Burton's *Owls of the World* confirmed the diagnosis that the chicks we had found were those of hawks, not owls. a) Baby Short-eared Owls have down-covered tarso-metatarsals and toes. The bare legs and toes of the largest nestling are visible in the picture. b) The ceres of young Short-eared Owls are covered with down. The photo clearly shows the bare ceres of our birds. c) In all hawks but the Osprey, the nostrils open on the cere (see the chick to the left). In all owls other than the Burrowing Owl, the nostrils open along the junction of the cere and the bill.

On June 23, the Knights returned to the nest site and found that the biggest nestling had sprouted tail feathers and was strong enough to walk, but the small one looked frail. Subsequently, Cal Knight flushed the mother from the nest. When they went out again in early July the young were gone. N. S. HALMI, Route 6, Iowa City.



Young Northern Harriers

Photo by N. S. Halmi

Egyptian Goose Associates with Canada Geese in Northwestern Iowa -- An Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*) was sighted 8 May 1977 on Cunningham Slough in Emmet County. This obvious escapee was identified as a male from its hoarse, husky voice that resembles breathing or hissing. This bird is a sheldgoose that is a member of the tribe Tadornini. The Egyptian Goose is fairly large with a pale gray head and neck and with a reddish cinnamon band on the hind neck. Chestnut patches occur around the eyes and a chestnut ring is around the lower neck. The mantle is a rusty gray with the abdomen being much paler. Wing coverts are white, the secondaries are a metallic green, and the primary feathers are black. The tail and rump are black. The soft parts are pink (Delacour 1973, *The Waterfowl of the World*, in Vol. 1: 235-238).

The Egyptian Goose is native to all parts of Africa with the exception of desert and deeply forested regions. This bird is very hardy and has been well established as a captive or feral bird in various parts of the world. It is said that as a captive, this bird requires a great deal of space due to its temper and intolerance to other birds (Delacour 1973, *The Waterfowl of the World*, in Vol. 1: 235-238).

This same sheldgoose was sighted again on 15 June 1977 north of Ingham Lake in Emmet County and again on 11 July 1977 on High Lake in Emmet County. On all occasions this bird was seen with Giant Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis maxima*). In May and June this Egyptian Goose was associated with nonbreeding Canada Geese, but in July, it was seen with a flock of about 125 Canada Geese consisting of breeders, nonbreeders and young of the year. On all occasions this Egyptian Goose was seen feeding on Golden Dock (*Rumex maritimus*), swimming, loafing, or flying with the other geese. There appeared to be no conflict between the Egyptian Goose and any of the Canada Geese.

The origin of this sheldgoose is unknown, but it is likely to have escaped from a farm or private collection in Iowa or a neighboring state. This sighting does show that Iowa birders need to be constantly aware of the possibility of seeing escaped birds as well as native species. The sheldgoose was also observed by Steve Custer of Estherville, Gary Littauer of Charles City, and Mark Ryan of Ames. -- THOMAS A. NIGUS, Dept. of Animal Ecology, Iowa State University, Ames.

A Marsh Nesting Colony of Black-crowned Night Herons -- On 21 June 1977 at West Hottes Lake just west of Spirit Lake in Dickinson County, a colony of marsh nesting Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) was discovered by Iowa Conservation Commission personnel and myself during a waterfowl banding operation. Doug Harr, Ron Howing, Tom Neal, all wildlife biologists with the Commission, and I estimated the number of nests to be 140. We also observed more than 200 birds in the air or sitting on nests. The nests were found in Hardstem Bulrush (*Scirpus acutus*), which was also used as nesting material. Dr. James J. Dinsmore and Mark R. Ryan of Iowa State University and I are making further investigations on this colony. The following is a brief summary of the nesting history of Black-crowned Night Herons in northwestern Iowa and of the recent nesting history for Iowa.

From 1893 through at least 1916 a large night heron colony was present at Heron Lake, Jackson County, Minnesota some 20 miles north of Spirit Lake (T.S. Roberts 1932). F. L. R. Roberts (1939, 1941) mentions a night heron colony just north of Spirit Lake that was active for several years prior to 1939 and was abandoned in 1940. This might be the Heron Lake colony, but records do not clarify this. Bennett and LaMar (1937) discovered a colony of 31 nests in bulrushes in Barringer's Slough, Clay County in 1937. Low (1941) also saw this colony in 1941. It was reported that there were 500 nests in the Ruthven area in 1942 (Serbousek 1942), and Provost (1947) studied the Barringer's Slough colony in 1942 finding 150 nests. Although no nests were ever seen, Glover (1948) felt that one or more pairs of Black-crowned Night Herons nested at Goose Lake in Hamilton County. The next and last record of a night heron nest in northwestern Iowa was at Rush Lake in Palo Alto County in 1968 (Weller and Fredrickson 1974). This single nest was found in cattails (*Typha*).

Since 1960, the only published Iowa nest records of Black-crowned Night Herons (other than the single Rush Lake nest) have come from Goose Lake in Greene County where Faaborg (1967) counted 150 active nests in trees. In 1968 this colony was abandoned but Jessen (1974) suspected that there was again a night heron colony at Goose Lake which he described as now being a cattail marsh.

It is not known how long the night heron colony at West Hottes Lake has been in existence, but more night herons have been seen in northwestern Iowa this year than in the recent past. The discovery of this marsh nesting colony is an exciting event. This is especially true since this species is on the blue lists of the National Audubon Society (Arbib 1976) and of Iowa (Brown 1975).

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- THOMAS A. NIGUS, Dept. of Animal Ecology, Iowa State University, Ames.

Lake Rathbun Heronry -- In the upper reaches of Lake Rathbun the trees were left standing when the lake formed. These are hardwood (hickory and oak) which grew along the river and out to some distance, and many of them were huge. As the channel overflowed and their roots stood in water they died, shed their smaller branches, and with the help of woodpeckers became benevolent hosts to seventeen observed species of cavity nesters. Indeed they extend their hospitality to a Great Blue Heron rookery, several Turkey Vulture roosts, Spotted Sandpiper, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Belted Kingfishers. As you enter this area via the old channel of the Chariton River, you invade an extraneous world -- part swamp, part forest -- where fallen, rotting trees become ferneries and standing trees assume grotesque shapes. Following this waterway in canoe or electric motor-powered boat, you quietly observe the birds who refuge here. Occasionall the channel will follow the green shore line where many song birds nest. In a three-hour trip one can tally a very respectable bird list.

The heronry this year contains only 18 nests compared to 28 last year although it is very active and seems to include a number of non-nesting adults. The channel goes directly under the nests which are concentrated in a half block area. We began observing heron in the area from March 31 on, and, about April 17, they began work on the nests, mostly adding to the ones used last year. On a June 1 trip, most nests seemed to have a brooding female and, on the most recent trip, July 2, four young could be seen standing in many of the nests with some perched on nearby branches. The sight is something one might see in modern art -- the young assuming a contorted stance which they hold the entire time they are observed. The adults fly to adjacent trees until the intruders move on. It appears that a second nesting has begun in some nests. The vulture roosts are adjacent to the heronry. Actually one heron nest is in a favorite vulture roost where 10-12 vultures may be lolling. There seems to be no problem with cohabitation.

Next in interest to most visitors to the area are the Prothonotary Warblers. On May 26, 9 singing males were counted, with 4-5 singers on June 23rd. Several nests have been observed, none more than 4 or 5 feet above water. Two have been just above the water so that one sitting in a boat could look directly into the large cavity which held the nest and observe the 6 creamy eggs with their delicate mauve markings laid on a mossy bed. The males with their cadmium orange heads and their loud insistent singing are hard to overlook! The female however ignores the visitor and goes quietly about her duties.

As the boat moves noiselessly along, a raucous "whoo-eek" alerts one to the presence of a wood duck family, and you catch a glimpse of the female moving toward cover with her 12 ducklings literally running on water in their haste to keep up. Four families were observed on July 2. Last year a Barred Owl sat in his hole and stared impolitely as we passed beneath, and a Brown Creeper was seen several times through June and July but no evidences of nesting. One straight tree without branches and with holes at all levels is apartment house to Tree Swallows, and a bee tree which overhangs the channel entices Eastern Kingbirds. All of the five common woodpeckers nest here although the Red-headed is legion -- also the American Kestrel, the Great Crested Flycatcher and the Eastern Bluebird. Surprisingly, or maybe not, the ubiquitous House Sparrow is abundant. Park and Conservation officers tell us the dead trees may stand another ten years, but we and the birds will enjoy it in the meantime! CHARLOTTE SCOTT, Seymour.

The Say's Phoebe Returns to Plymouth County -- In 1960 I was privileged to find what was probably the first recorded nesting on the Say's Phoebe in Iowa. Through the next several years I made this species a special study project and one year located nesting sites in twenty-one locations in Plymouth County and two locations in Sioux County.

After this peak year the phoebes seemed to have trouble hatching their eggs and numbers declined rapidly until in the early 1970s I could locate no more. Several persons I visited with attributed this to poisoning from agricultural spraying but I had my doubts. Poisonous insecticides just weren't used that extensively in this area. My theory was that we had a series of wetter than normal seasons and this bird of the dry western areas just couldn't adapt.

We have had three years of drouth now and in July of 1977 I saw a Say's Phoebe fly across the road about one-half mile from my home. This sighting was within one-half mile of two sets of empty farm buildings and four occupied sets. I checked out the unused sets of buildings as thoroughly as possible and found a Say's Phoebe at one set but couldn't locate a nest. There was an old threshing machine in this yard which could have housed a nest but I didn't examine it that carefully. It is also

quite possible they may be located at one of the occupied farm sites. I have seen them flying several times since and time permitting will hopefully be able to report this interesting species is once again establishing a population here.
ELDON BRYANT, R.R. 1, Akron.

One Day Bald Eagle County - February 5, 1977 -- Again, most of the Mississippi River was covered from its source to below St. Louis and then into Kentucky and Tennessee. The Wisconsin River was covered by Terry Ingram and party. The Illinois River was covered from Ottawa to Grafton. This river was handled by Dr. L. H. Princen. The area of the Mississippi from Bellevue to Warsaw, Iowa and again covered by cars and a plane. Dr. Hayden DeDecker flew the plane with Peter Petersen and Ernie Sadler doing the counting. The St. Louis Audubon Society had the most people counting. Lockmasters, Fish & Wildlife and Game Management, Bird Clubs and others took part. Thanks to all.

Location	Adults	Immatures	Not	
			Aged	Total
Lock & Dam 3 thru Lock & Dam 11	114	10	1	125
Lock & Dam 12 to Lock & Dam 22	319	65	4	388
From Lock & Dam 22 to below St. Louis	119	73	15	207
Illinois River	38	57	5	100
River Totals	590	205	25	820
River percentages	74.2	25.8		
Illinois Wildlife Refuges	32	69	5	106
Kentucky - complete state	19	22	0	41
Tennessee - complete state	21	21	0	42
Missouri - 3 reports	27	26	0	53
Iowa - 1 report	9	7	0	16
South Dakota - 1 report	31	8	0	39
Nebraska - Most of state	49	36	21	106
Totals	156	120	21	297
Percentage	57	43		

19 Golden Eagles were found, 10 in Kentucky.

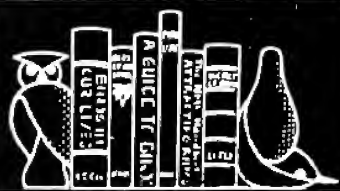
Comment: All areas reported severe ice conditions with very little open water. We had less open water than anytime since the start of the count. This depressed the count greatly. This was in direct contrast to last year's count when the warm weather also caused the eagles to spend most of their days in ravins and heavy went north sooner. Both years found eagles at considerable distance from water and many were missed. The highest count was in 1972 when 1147 eagles were counted on the rivers. Last year 1012 were counted. This year only 820. The weather also caused the eagles to spend most of their days in ravins nad heavy woods. This made for difficult counting. However, it is not advised to walk into the roosting areas and disturb the birds. It's much better to miss them. This also depressed the count this year. This year the eagles came south earlier and in greater numbers. Some peak numbers and dates follow: Nov. 12 Pool 9 - 150 eagles, Dec. 4, Pools 10 & 11, 115 eagles, Dec. 13, Lock & Dam 12 -- 163 which is nearly double the previous record. Dec. 12, Lock & Dam 13 -- 136 eagles about four times any other high. Lock & Dam 14, 80 eagles on Dec. 11. Squaw Creek Refuge had a high of 252. Immatures ratio were excellent. On the January Waterfowl Count where eagles are also counted in Illinois 248 were found. No count was made from Rock Island, Ill. to the Wisconsin border. I know of 242 plus eagles that were missed here. Indiana count was cancelled due to all lakes being frozen. Florida will count

in May. This count was financed in part by the National Wildlife Federation. Next year's count will be Feb. 11. ELTON FAWKS, 510 Island Ave., East Moline, Ill. 61244.

Ringed Turtle Dove in Des Moines -- For several weeks I had been hearing a different dove call in the yard. My frequent attempts to locate the dove were unsuccessful. Several days would elapse between my hearing the calls. On July 15, 1977, I again heard the dove calling in a large oak tree in the front yard but could not locate it. Upon entering the house, I glanced through a window and on the ground about twenty-five feet away were two Mourning Doves and a dove I had never before seen. It was sand colored with a black crescent on the back of its neck and a short tail in contrast with the long tapered tail of the Mourning Dove. It was giving the same call I had been hearing for several weeks. As I watched, it chased one Mourning Dove away and disappeared behind some shrubs with the other Mourning Dove. I picked up my binoculars and went outside just in time to see the two doves flying away together, the Mourning Dove in the lead. I heard it call twice that afternoon but have not seen it since.

I was sure I had not observed this dove before. Identification of my new bird as a Ringed Turtle Dove was made easy by *Birds of North America* which lists it as "a common cage bird that has become a local resident in central downtown Los Angeles, in Tampa and Miami." Although I have four and five Mourning Doves eating daily under the Niger seed bird feeders, no Ringed Turtle Dove has ever appeared with them. After traveling over the United States and Canada looking for life birds, I certainly was thrilled to find one in my own yard. HELEN M. PEASLEY, 2001 Nash Drive, Des Moines.

BOOK REVIEWS



The Audubon Society Guide to North American Birds -- Eastern Region -- John Bull and John Farrand -- Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, New York -- 775 p., 584 color photographs, one map, many line drawings -- 1977 -- \$7.95.

It has been over ten years since we have had a new field guide for North America. The latest effort is clearly aimed at the novice birder. It features some innovative ideas, such as using photographs entirely for identification. Included are four photographs of I.O.U. Vice-president Carl Kurtz. Also new is visual organization by color and shape and text arranged by habitats and keyed to the photographs. The photographs are generally of good quality and well reproduced although it is not possible to present side-by-side photos in the same scale. This results, for example, in Common Screech, Long-eared and Great Horned Owls looking about the same size. Length is given, but will the beginners respond more to what they see? Also only six or fewer species can be viewed and compared on facing pages. An effort has been made to include various age and sex differences in plumage. The habitat oriented text includes description, voice, habitat, range,

nesting, and some general remarks on habits, food and name origin. The major drawback to this system, aside from the obvious difficulty to easily locate text on a familiar species, seems to be the somewhat "arbitrary" assignment of all species to some habitat. For example, where does one find the Common Nighthawk? City Park and Suburban Areas are the only likely urban sounding categories. However it is listed under Grasslands, seemingly an obscure choice for populated Eastern areas.

Time will tell as to the practical value of this new format. The "Peterson" system Roger Tory devised was not accepted and adopted overnight. This could be a good book for the new birder, maybe better than the guides currently in wide use. It does not seem to be useful to the more experienced birder and is not recommended as an addition to established ornithological libraries. ed.

Rails of the World -- S. Dillon Ripley, illustrated by J. Fenwick Lansdowne -- David R. Godine, Publisher, Boston -- 450 p., 41 color plates, 35 black-and-white illustrations, 17 maps -- 1977 -- \$75.00 trade edition, \$400.00 deluxe edition.

The long heralded monograph on rails is finally in print and it is certainly well worth the wait. The price is high but so is the quality. The volume is large, 10 x 14 inches, printed on heavy paper and features beautifully reproduced plates. Ripley has spent twenty-five years researching and writing this comprehensive study. It is certainly the definitive work on the rails. It contains descriptions of habitats, distribution, general characteristics and settlement patterns of the one hundred twenty-nine species recognized by the author. All species are illustrated in color. Probably a forerunner of a check list change is the lumping of King and Clapper Rails into one species, the only taxonomic change affecting Iowa birds on the species level. Since marshes are among the most rapidly disappearing habitats the rails are among the most endangered families of birds in the world.

If you enjoy beautiful books and like a good investment this volume is worth considering from both aspects. The trade edition totals 2800, the deluxe edition 280 making the price likely to escalate over the years. ed.

Songbirds in Your Garden -- John K. Terres-Hawthorn Books, Inc., New York, New York -- 301 p., many line drawings -- 1977 -- paperbound -- \$5.95.

This third edition of a "standard" source of the basics for attracting birds provides another option to the homeowners who want to enhance their property. The author has updated the text and list of reference books smoothly. The topics covered include feeding techniques, bird houses, bird baths, care of young birds, hummingbird attraction methods, plantings, bird tapes for attracting birds and building a bluebird trail. Appendices cover sources for supplies, flowers attractive to birds, life spans and capsulized nesting information. Many helpful hints and suggestions for little things that can be very productive for attracting birds. ed.

Check-list of Birds of Northwestern Nebraska and Southwestern South Dakota -- Richard C. Rosche -- Published by the author, P. O. Box 482, Crawford, Nebraska, 69339 -- 15 p. -- 1977 -- paperbound -- \$2.00.

This mimeographed check-list covers the southern Black Hills and Buffalo Gap National Grassland in South Dakota and Nebraska National Forest, Oglala National Grassland, Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Fort Robinson and Chadron State Parks, Nebraska. Following A. B. A. order and common names, the species list gives status, abundance, spring and fall arrival and departure dates, states in which observed, and nesting status. The checklist was produced as much

to point out gaps in the current knowledge of the birds of the area as to provide information on what is known. Several areas in Iowa could benefit from this type of publication. ed.

Management of Migratory Shore and Upland Game Birds in North America -- Glen C. Sanderson, Editor -- The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Washington, D.C. -- 358 p., many black-and-white photographs, maps, charts and tables -- 1977 -- \$1.00 for postage and handling.

Prepared by and for wildlife management personnel, this volume draws together much material which is of interest to birders. For each species covered the chapter author presents a summary of basic information about the bird, a description and density figures, census procedures, population trends, current and potential harvest, species summaries and public needs, management and research needs and costs, recommendations and literature cited. The length of the chapters and quality of the research and writing varies but is uniformly good. It is a specialized book written for a specialized readership. ed.

The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland -- J. T. R. Sharrock, compiler -- T. & A. D. Poyser, Ltd., Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, U.K. -- 477 p., many line drawings and large maps -- 1976 -- 10 pounds.

This atlas is compiled from a survey of breeding birds conducted from 1968-72. Organized by the British Trust for Ornithology and the Irish Wildbird Conservancy, a force of over ten thousand birdwatchers visited 3,862 ten hectare squares. The program resulted in 285,000 records, which are summarized in this book, making it probably the most comprehensive cooperative undertaking in ornithological circles. Almost all species, over 200, which breed in the area are mapped on a full page map with the size of the dot in each ten hectare square section indicating their abundance. The full page of the text which accompanies these maps describes the species habitat, the problems involved in proving breeding, historical background and any changes in its numbers.

Some states in the U.S. have begun this type of project but it is currently rather hit or miss and does not follow a standard format. The breeding bird surveys which began in the late 1960s provide similar information on a less detailed basis. The degree to which the British have refined their bird study continues to present goals we Americans should strive to emulate. ed.

Watching Birds -- An Introduction to Ornithology -- Roger F. Pasquier -- Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston -- 301 p., over 100 line drawings and many maps -- 1977 -- \$9.95.

This book seems to be aimed at the serious birder who wishes to go beyond listing. Several other books are in print which deal with essentially the same type of treatment which Pasquier presents. Some of these are more advanced while others boil down their subject matter more. The prospective purchaser should probably examine several before making a choice.

The book deals with the usual general topics, how and why birds are studied, origin, evolution, speciation, feathers, flight, food, feeding habits, digestion, anatomy, voice, breeding, migration, winter habits, distribution, conservation, bird attracting and ornithology today. The level of the writing does not assume a large technical vocabulary. The drawings expand the text and illustrate many of the author's examples. Everything considered it's perhaps as good a general ornithological text as is available in the U.S. today. ed.

Pine Crossbills -- Desmond Nethersole-Thompson -- T & A. D. Poyser, Ltd., Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, U.K. -- 256 p., one color plate and 24 black-and-white photographs, many line drawings, charts and tables -- 1975 -- \$14.50.

Pine Crossbills, or Red Crossbills to Americans, are migrants and winter visitors who always seem to turn up when least expected. They breed at various times of the year, from February through November. Their movements are erratic, often governed by the cone crops more than photo-period or weather. The book presents a complete life history of this bird in England with input from other European areas. It is written in a very readable style and is supplemented by appendices on taxonomy, a nest diary, nest list of the author's studies, behavior at nest and parasites. ed.

How to Control Garden Pests Without Killing Almost Everything Else -- Helgo and William Olkowski -- Rachel Carson Trust for the Living Environment, Inc., Washington, D.C. -- 14 p., several line drawings -- 1977 -- paperbound -- \$1.50.

Conservationists are aware of the dangers of pesticides but often have difficulty finding an alternative. This booklet presents principles of garden ecology necessary to develop a sensible pest control program. The authors also include guidelines for choosing a pesticide if nothing else will solve the problem. Although a bit expensive for its size the booklet provides information difficult if not impossible to find elsewhere and the proceeds do support the Rachel Carson Trust. ed.

Songbirds of the Eastern and Central States -- Trudy L. Rising, illustrated by Kathryn De Vos-Miller -- A Scribner-Tundra Book, New York -- 96 p., 43 color plates -- 1977 -- paperbound -- \$3.95.

This little book, aimed at children and novice birders, serves as a nice introduction to the more common land birds. The paintings are nicely done and the text provides the basic information to introduce the bird. The choice of common names is inconsistent although usually all names used recently are included. Although a bit expensive for its size it would make a nice first bird book for a child. ed.

Life in Desert and Plain -- Richard Perry -- Taplinger Publishing Co., New York -- 253 p., many line drawings -- 1977 -- \$10.95.

Previously we reviewed *Life in Forest and Jungle* by Perry (I.B.L. Vol. 47, p. 70). This volume is another in "The Many Worlds of Wildlife Series". Again the author gleans the scientific literature for word pictures of the life styles of some unique creatures. Among the birds covered are the Ostrich, African Weavers, Egyptian Vulture, Budgerigar, Emu and Rhea. The text is very readable and the style smooth. ed.

A Guide to Bird-watching in Mallorca -- Eddie Watkinson -- A. B. Grafish Formgiving, Stockholm, available in U.S. from M. Philbrick, P.O. Box 83, Vashon, Washington 98070 -- 56 p., many maps -- paperbound -- \$3.90 including postage.

Several years ago we reviewed a general volume dealing with nature observation in Mallorca (or Majorca), an island off the coast of Spain (I.B.L. Vol. 45 p. 100). There is now a bird watching guide for this popular resort spot. The island is a good location for the observation of European migrants and now there is a source for details on the best birding locations. In addition to the birding areas the book covers places to stay, car rental information, telephones, bus service, traveler's checks and complaints. ed.

Request for Information

GIANT CANADA GEESE

An effort is being made to determine the movement, migration patterns, and wintering area of Giant Canada Geese that have been established in northwestern Iowa. Geese have been fitted with blue neck-collars that are coded with two letters followed by two numbers and have been banded with Fish and Wildlife Service leg bands. If you see any Canada Geese with these neck-collars, please record the collar code (when possible), the location, the number of geese sighted, nearest city, county, and state. Information sent to me will be reported to the Bird Banding Laboratory, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Please send information on your sightings to: Thomas A. Nigus, Dept. of Animal Ecology, 124 Sciences II, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011. Your help in this project will be very much appreciated.

WANTED: DATA ON THE SEASONAL DISTRIBUTION OF NORTH AMERICAN GULLS

We are developing a procedure whereby the U.S. Air Force can predict the potential seasonal hazard to aircraft represented by gulls in parts of North America. This knowledge will be used to schedule missions around high risk areas thereby reducing the likelihood of bird-aircraft collisions. Supplemental data on local gull populations are needed from all parts of the continent. The assistance of field workers is solicited to aid us in this task. Please submit reports of your gull observations to Dr. William E. Southern, Department of Biological Sciences, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Ill. 60115. Data will be gathered for a 2-year period beginning 1 September 1977.

For each observation, please provide the following information: list of species present, approximate number of each species, precise locality description, dates observed, any information about causes for concentrations (e.g. sanitary landfill operation), and any details about the frequency of such concentrations in the respective areas. Information is sought from inland as well as coastal localities.

Thank you for your cooperation.

MARTIN PAPERS DESIRED

A comprehensive bibliography of the North and South American martins (*Progne* spp.) is currently in preparation. It will include all papers dealing solely or partly with martins, except local annotated checklists. Authors wishing to have material included should send an abstract or reprint to Charles R. Brown, Box 1309, Austin College, Sherman, Texas 75090.

I.O.U. Checklists Available

Twelve page reprints of the I.O.U. Checklist of Iowa Birds which appeared in the June issue of *Iowa Bird Life* are obtainable from the librarian, Mrs. Beryl W. Layton, 1560 Linmar Drive N.E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402 for \$.50 plus .15 postage and handling or a stamped, self-addressed envelope. A few copies of the **Annotated List of the Birds of Iowa**, W. H. Brown, 1971 remain at \$1.00 plus .25 postage and handling. They are also in the hands of the librarian. ed.